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CALAYNOS:

A TRAGEDY.

BY

GEORGE H. BOKER.

PHILADELPHIA:
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By George H. Boker,

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PROLOGUE.

Look not, grave critic, for perfection here,
No gods and goddesses shall move your ear,
My little stage mere men and women fill,
All have some good to love, to hate some ill;
A hundred springs of action move each mind,
And in their mean the character you'll find.
Interests and feelings, base and good, have they;
Some draw towards heaven, and some—the other way.
Arcadian virtue and Arcadian crime,
In abstract form, may crowd the Epic clime;
But 'tis the Drama's task the world to show,
Where bad and good alternate gloom or glow—
Where in each mind are various passions fixed;
Virtue with vice, and vice with virtue mixed.
Some lean to virtue, some to vice give way;
But neither bent has undivided sway.

Our plot turns on the loathing which they feel,
Who draw their spotless race from proud Castile,
For those whose lineage bears the faintest stain
Of the hot blood which fires the Moorish vein.
No time can reconcile, no deed abate,
For that one taint, the haughty Spaniard's hate:
As the sound man the loathsome leper shuns,
So pass Castilians by Granada's sons.
This is the key which gives our plot to view—
Turn o'er the leaf, the way is clear—adieu.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Calaynos, ...	*A wealthy nobleman.*
Don Luis, ...	*His friend.*
Don Miguel, Don Lopez, ...	*Gentlemen of Seville.*
Oliver, ...	*Calaynos' secretary.*
Soto, ...	*Don Luis' servant.*
Friar Gil.	
Baltasar, Pedro, ...	*Calaynos' servants.*
Doña Alda, ...	*Wife to Calaynos.*
Martina, ...	*Her maid.*

Four Usurers, a Forester, Servants, &c.

Scene, Calaynos' Castle, Seville, and the neighbourhood.

CALAYNOS.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *The Great Hall in* CALAYNOS' *Castle. Enter* PEDRO *and* BALTASAR, *carrying bundles.*

PEDRO.

I like not this journey to Seville.

BALTASAR.

O, you like nothing that savours of gentility.

PEDRO.

How can I like it? I tell you this genteel savour is deadly. I'd as soon die by sprats as by turbot I've a rhyme in my head.

BALTASAR.

And a rind over that: what is it?

PEDRO.

" *When a Calaynos shall go to Seville,*
Then sure that Calaynos shall go to ill."

My grandam taught me that. She could read, and was a great diviner, with a beard that would make two of yours. She told fortunes by the way a cat jumped, or a sparrow flew; and as often hit the truth as the wisest of your scholars. If she hit it not, then was not the thing foreordered; and she left that for the schoolmen to wrangle about. Why does my lord go, Baltasar?

BALTASAR.

To do homage for his lands, as all vassals must. The king granted his ancestors lands; and my lord must acknowledge the king's right and sovereignty, as he holds the land from his forefathers.

PEDRO.

Can a man have four fathers and but one mother? Then was not his mother an honest woman.

Mayhap, some day, the king will take back his land.

BALTASAR.

'T would pose him to do that.

PEDRO.

Here's another wise thing! Is that a king's bounty? My lord says, "Sir king, I'll keep what's my own most faithfully." Says the king, "You may keep what's not mine." "Thank you most humbly, for nothing," says my lord: and so they part. That's worth a journey to hear! Why a fool can see through it.

BALTASAR.

So I see.

PEDRO.

If you see, you are a fool, and fell in a fool's trap.

BALTASAR.

So I see again, I fell in a fool's trap. Take up your traps, good fool, and be off; for here comes my lord.

[*Exeunt with their bundles.*

(*Enter* CALAYNOS *and* DOÑA ALDA.)

DOÑA ALDA.

Nay, dear Calaynos, go not hence to-day.
Since morn, the clouds have hugged the hidden tops
Of the rude peaks that gird our mountain home:
Nor could the fiercest northern blasts shake off
Their close embrace. But now, in one huge mass,
The sluggish vapours down the mountains' sides
Roll like an inundation. Well thou know'st
That signs like these portend a coming storm:
Therefore, until the storm is past, delay;
For nothing urges this immediate haste.

CALAYNOS.

To please thee, Alda, I'll remain to-day.
But, for a mountain maiden, thou hast grown
Strangely afraid of gentle summer showers;
Perchance thy love exaggerates the fear.
Thou'rt not thus chary to expose thyself
E'en to the blasts which chilling winter blows.

DOÑA ALDA.

If not to-day, why go to-morrow morn?

Or why next day? Or why go'st thou at all?
If thou wilt go, then let me go with thee.
An hour, and I'll be ready: I shall need
But scanty preparation to set forth.

CALAYNOS.

Thou hast forgotten. But a moment since,
Thy fear was brewing a fast-gathering storm;
Which thou, in fancy, on the mountains saw'st
Resting its threatening front. Alda, I see
That 'tis thy fond intent to win my mind
From what I must perform. Long since in death
My father closed his eyes; yet ancient rites,
Which signiors owe their liege, by me unmarked,
Their term of grace have passed. But now the king,
By stiff set phrase of law, allegiance claims,
And homage due demands.

DOÑA ALDA.

Far be't from me
To counsel breach of law. Nay, go thou must;
But why not I with thee? Shall I thus pine—

Shut, like a cloistered nun, in these dark walls—
Whilst thou with retinue and pomp of power,
Seville mak'st wonder?—Beautiful Seville!
Of which I've dreamed, until I saw its towers
In every cloud that hid the setting sun;
Saw its long trains of youths and maidens fair
Sweep, like a sunlit stream, along the streets;
Saw its cathedrals vast, its palaces,
Its marts o'erladen with the Indies' spoils,
Its galleys rocking in the crowded bays;
Heard its loud hum by day, its airs by night
Struck from guitars, that guide the busy feet
Of rosy youth across the springing ground.
Methinks the moon shines brighter on Seville,
And every star looks larger for mere joy!
And then, Martina—

CALAYNOS.

Ah! Martina?—so.

DOÑA ALDA.

But, dear Calaynos, thou'lt not blame the girl:

She in Seville was born; her youthful days,
When the heart easiest takes impress of joy,
Were in Seville all past. Martina says,
That 'mong the ladies there, none could o'ertop
In state, or retinue, or worship paid
By all the glittering throng that girds the throne,
The bride of great Calaynos.

CALAYNOS.

Alda, cease:
Thou'rt pleading 'gainst thyself; nor dost thou know,
How frail the fabric of the dream-wove vision,
When cunning fancy plies her golden hand.

DOÑA ALDA.

What meanest thou?

CALAYNOS.

Martina told but half:
Or did she tell how sloth and beggary,
Closely attended by their handmaid vice,
Stare, with lack-lustre and ferocious eyes,

Into the porch of every palace gate?
How want creeps forth at night with tottering pace,
And 'gainst the windows of the revellers,
Flattens its pinched and wasted features out,
Cursing the feasts for which one half the world
Labours unpaid? And, Alda, did she tell
Of marketable crime, of sin for sale?
Of multitudes neck-deep in ignorance,
Toiling with murmurs 'neath a servile yoke,
Checked and o'erawed by bayonet and axe?
How they who bend to power, and lap its milk,
Are fickler and more dangerous far, than they
Who honestly defy it? How jealousy
Consumes their hearts who most caress and woo it?
Know'st thou the slippery falsehoods of the Court,
Where every step is on a quaking bog,
Where men spend lives on hopes and promises,
And pine on smiles, and starve on smooth-told lies?
Thou know'st not this; nor shall thy rustic mind,
Pure as the Guadalquiver, ere it flows

Past the foul sluices that Seville outpours,
Know aught of it.

DOÑA ALDA.

If thou wilt have it so,
I needs must stay. But I shall count the hours,
And chide along the slow-paced summer days:
For thou art all with whom I dare to mate,
A lonely queen, without a court or friend.
And, losing thee, thou leav'st me with these walls;
Whose forms I'll hate, because they rise between
Thee and myself. Ah! it is very sad
To be shut up, for days and days together,
With these old portraits of thine ancestors—
That look like Moors, though they be Christian men—
All mailed and helmed, whose knit and warlike brows
Beneath their casques send forth a settled scowl,
Darkening the hall; or see, like shadows, come
The old retainers, by my presence awed,

To beg some leave they need not have besought.
What gloomy state! Martina calls me Proserpine.

CALAYNOS.

Again "Martina!" Love, I fear thy maid
Has put these vagrant fancies in thy head.
I never liked her bold, pert, city modes:
With upturned nose she treads the castle floors,
As if she thought the very air might breed
Some loathsome plague. Then at our festivals—
Time-worn, though quaint and homely they may be—
A supercilious smile comes o'er her face;
As if she, fallen from paradise, perforce
Endured the antics of rude savages.
I like not that her busy tongue should stuff
Thine open ears, who'rt ever ripe for change,
With all the worn-out tinsel of a town;
And breed in thee a discontent for state
Which many a queen might pine with envy for.

DOÑA ALDA.

Calaynos, thou dost rate my girl too hard.

I wonder not that she, a city maid,
Should sometimes long for the more joyous scenes
With which her memory mocks our quiet life.

CALAYNOS.

Well, let her go—she is no slave of mine.

DOÑA ALDA.

Her love for me has forged a stronger bar
To keep her here, than strictest bondage could.

CALAYNOS.

Her love for thee! Nay, Alda, there are those
Who love to live where they may scold and frown,
And toss their heads at every thing they see:
So, by affected knowledge, seem above
All the poor fools that round them wondering crowd.
Such is thy maid.

DOÑA ALDA.

Calaynos, truce to this.
Martina loves me; shall I throw her off?

CALAYNOS.

I do not urge it. But thou'rt lately grown
Strangely ill-humoured with thy dwelling-place,
And vexed and discontented with thyself.
Come to the casement; look from these huge walls,
Whose massive strength has held a king at bay,
Down on the ripening fields of yellow grain;
Let thine eyes roam o'er swarming villages,
Busy with life and filled with happy hearts,
Far to the hills that, with their smoky heads,
Hem in the view and guard our favoured vale:
Round this domain the proudest bird of air
Could scarcely circle with an untired wing—
All this is thine. O, what a field for good
Lies here outspread before thee! Life employed
In ministration to this grateful land,
Would win for thee a place beside the saints.

DOÑA ALDA.

Have I not ever given, at morn and eve,
To all the ragged band that throngs our gate?

CALAYNOS.

This is but half the task of charity.
Seek out the needy, cheer the wretched mind,
Urge on the slothful, pour thy spirit's balm
On wounds which time has fretted to the quick;
Counsel the weak, and make the strong more strong;
The soul has urgent need for faith and hope,
More pressing and immediate than the wants
The choking sailor feels upon the wreck.

DOÑA ALDA.

Why now, my lord, thou'dst make a nun of me—
One of those maids of black-robed charity,
Who sometimes hither come, with solemn step,
To ask my bounty. Convents are there not,
By thee endowed, to feed each starving soul?

CALAYNOS.

Yes; but in works of good there cannot be
Too many hands; the task is ne'er o'erdone.
Alda, my grave discourse fatigues thine ear.—

Well, I must leave thee to prepare my train;
My homebred knaves are slack at setting forth,
And I must urge them. Farewell, love.

DOÑA ALDA.

Farewell. [*Exit* CALAYNOS.

Thus comes he ever with that thoughtful brow,
Thus goes he ever with that calm, cold mien,
Thus would he ever be, thus passionless,
If all the world were hissing in his face!
More like a father than a husband he—
O! how could love for me usurp abode
In such a heart! Martina, are you there?

(*Enter* MARTINA.)

MARTINA.

My lady, did you call?

DOÑA ALDA.

Come hither, girl.
O, what a sermon has been preached to me!

MARTINA.

On what?—by whom?

DOÑA ALDA.

By whom but by my lord?
And what the subject, think you, of his speech?

MARTINA.

On the regeneration of the world;
Taking his text from Plato; quoting large,
In Greek and Hebrew, to make clear the fact
That two and two make four. Good Lord! they say
He talks the Cura out of countenance;
And so comes down upon the good man's head,
With hints of things above his scope of thought,
That he, both night and morning, prays kind heaven
To keep your lord from utter heresy.

DOÑA ALDA.

You have shot wide the mark; for charity
Was all he taught.

MARTINA.

Ho! ho! he'd have you mount,
Like a mad nun, upon a sumpter mule,

And ride the country down, to vex the sick
With nauseous draughts—or have you thrust your face
In the affairs of every poor, proud man:
So would you gain wry mouths for recompense;
Or have a pack of haughty curses sent
To dog your steps.

DOÑA ALDA.

Peace, peace, you rattlepate!
My lord but thinks of benefits to man;
His every wish and act inclines to good.
And sometimes, in the dead and hush of night,
When evil thoughts dare scarcely walk abroad,
When loneliness and fear half play the part
Of humble holiness and force the heart,
Despite its wicked bent, to virtuous plans,
Some random word, which he, in passing, dropped
On the light fallow of my wavering mind,
Springs up and blossoms, with a promise fair;
But with the morning dew dries up the fruit,

And I laugh down, as weak and childish fright,
What, 'chance, an angel whispered in mine ear.

MARTINA.

Dear madam, you have grown as grave and sad
As your sage lord, by pondering o'er such things:
I prithee drive them out with gayer thoughts;
Or all within the castle may become
A band of nuns and sourest anchorites.

DOÑA ALDA.

Yet there is much of moment in these things,
Could we of fickle purpose, deem them so.

MARTINA.

Lady, I heard an old physician say,
That melancholy is the chiefest spring
Of raving madness. Dwell not on such thoughts.

DOÑA ALDA.

And would you rob me of my very thoughts,
The only things I have to wile the time?
What can I do, but think, and think, and think,
In this unvarying castle?

MARTINA.

There it is!
Could you but see Seville in all its pomp,
As I have seen it, when the Court is there—
Could you but see our king ride through the gate,
Decked like the east when morn first opes her eye;
Hear the loud flourishes of trump and drum,
The glad huzzas, the rattling musketry,
The pealing bells, the thundering cannon-shots;
See the great ships, the ocean's swans, bedecked
With silken banners, of all shapes and dyes;
The courtiers see, the proudest stars of Spain,
In one grand constellation sweep along;
Then think that you, the brightest star of all,
Might blot them half with your superior light!
Madam, my lord is wise to keep you here,
In utter ignorance of your rank and power;
Once knowing these, and gaining homage due,
'Twould stretch his arm to keep you from your rights.

DOÑA ALDA.

But he has no desire for this gay Court.

MARTINA.

He! why, to him the gay are butterflies,
Flitting around a light of which they die.
He looks on pleasure as a kind of sin;
Calls pastime waste-time. Each to his trade, say I.
I heard a man, who spent a mortal life
In hoarding up all kinds of stones and ores,
Call one, who spitted flies upon a pin,
A fool, to pass his precious lifetime thus!
What might delight you, lady, may not him;
And yet your pleasures argue you no fool,
Nor his grave brows prove a philosopher.

DOÑA ALDA.

Stop, malpert girl! you're trenching on my love;
Your glibly flowing tongue must not presume
Too far upon the license I allow.
Thus every day, of late, I've caught you up,
About to strike a side-blow at my lord.

MARTINA.

Pardon me, madam, if I went too far.
Of late my silly brain has been perplexed
With a great problem, which I cannot solve.
Thus runs the question—who are wise, who fools?
The man with heavy brows and solemn thoughts,
Looks on the gay as blank in fortune's wheel;
But then the fool laughs in his sapient face.
At this the sage flies in a windy rage,
And calls hard names, and works his angry liver
To bilious fits, which end the good man's days;
When laughs the ribald jester more and more.
Now which is wiser? He who frowns and scolds,
And views sweet nature in a sallow light;
Or he who takes what pleasure comes to hand,
Gleaning some honey from the bitterest flowers,
And, when death scowls, smiles in his hideous face?
Can you resolve?

DOÑA ALDA.

Not I, philosopher.

Your gentle education has nigh spoiled
A most complete, well-mannered waiting-maid.
But there walks Oliver, in sober thought;
Call him; perchance he can resolve your doubts.

MARTINA.

Yes, there he goes—just see him, mistress dear!—
Backward and forward, like a weaver's shuttle,
Spinning some web of wisdom most divine,
I warrant you. Observe his solemn brows,
His monk-like gait, his cap without a plume,
His stiff and formal clothes, sans tag or braid.
There is a nursling of this house of learning—
A man all head, without a heart or sense.
Once I made love to him, for lack of work,
And got a frown for all my tenderness:
Therefore I hate him! I can pardon one
Who felt affection, should he turn to hate;
But never one who slips my favours by.
Shall I address him?

DOÑA ALDA.

If it pleases you.

MARTINA.

Ho, Oliver! ho, sage! a mortal calls—
A mortal wandering in dark error's path—
For light and succour!

(*Enter* OLIVER.)

OLIVER.

Did you call me, lady?

DOÑA ALDA.

Martina called you.

OLIVER.

Yes, I know her voice.
I thought she called for you; her notes are pitched
Some octaves higher than your ladyship's,
And further heard.

DOÑA ALDA.

Nay, you two jar at once,

When brought in contact. Well, you must e'en
strike
Your angry blows without a witness near. [*Exit.*

MARTINA.

So then, you think my voice is over shrill
For your soft ears, attuned to Plato's spheres.

OLIVER.

Why did you call so loud, I walking near?

MARTINA.

You near! I thought you half way up to heaven—
How can a man be where his mind is not?
Wherein consists this thing which you call I;
In your gross flesh, or in your heaven-born spirit?

OLIVER.

Strive not to vex me with such mockery.
All your pert smartness, and your sallies shrewd,
Are spent with loss on ears as dull as mine.

MARTINA.

Ugh! man, but I do hate you!

OLIVER.

Hate me then.

MARTINA.

Our clay, the preachers say, was warmed to life;
But yours, your dull, cold mud, was froze to being.
I would not be the oyster that you are,
For all the pearls of wisdom in your shell!

OLIVER.

A truce to this. I haul my colours down;
I have no means to fight your light-armed tongue.
But I must warn you, for I late o'erheard
The words which you with Lady Alda held,
That if you urge your sensual doctrines more—
To the pollution of my lady's thoughts—
My lord shall know it.

MARTINA.

Pshaw! I meant no harm.

OLIVER.

I know not what you mean, but harm you do.

MARTINA.

Why talk you thus, you demi-atheist?
I've heard you hold a creed against the church,
Which, spread abroad, might overturn the world,
And send us all unbaptized to the pit.
They say you have no faith in good men's prayers;
And of salvation talk not, but progression.—
Are these things so?

OLIVER.

Are you Inquisitor?

MARTINA.

Did you say aught against the Holy Office?

OLIVER.

No word, to you, O pious Catholic!

MARTINA.

Ambassador from cloud-land, take your leave.
I do not wish to vex an oracle;
And we have bandied words enough to-day.

OLIVER.

I go; but keep my warning in your mind. [*Exit.*

MARTINA.

That man of learning has a lynx's eye.
I'll be more circumspect: it will not do
To have the great Calaynos at my ears;
To leave behind a home as warm as this,
Where I'm half mistress of whate'er it holds,
Again to struggle with the ruthless world:
Yet to Seville I'll go for wantonness.
Well, we shall see what woman's craft can do,
Against the brains of two philosophers. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The study of CALAYNOS. *Enter* OLIVER.

OLIVER.

I do not like this journey of my lord's—
And yet I know not why; the path is safe,

And we are guarded by a retinue.
'Tis many a year since last I saw Seville;
'Tis natural, therefore, I should wish to go:
Yet do I not. What can this feeling mean?
Is it that influence, o'ermastering will,
Presentiment, which pulls me from the wish,
And presses on my heart its leaden weight?
I've heard that soundest sleepers will awake
When danger steals upon them. It may be
The first, low knocking of death's pallid hand,
Ere he flings wide the gate which shelters life,
That so appals my mind, and shakes my purpose.
Pshaw! this is idle—I must e'en end thus,
As I began, I do not wish to go.

(*Enter* CALAYNOS.)

CALAYNOS.

Are all things ready for our setting forth?

OLIVER.

They are, my lord.

CALAYNOS.

Then, at the break of day,
Mount all the train.

OLIVER.

You have delayed till then?

CALAYNOS.

Yes; 'twas my lady's wish, not my intent.
But on the morrow we must sure begone;
We do but give our parting lengthened pangs
By keeping doubt alive.

(*Enter a Servant.*)

SERVANT.

My lord, old Friar Gil is in the hall,
And craves admittance.

CALAYNOS.

Friar Gil! how's this?
'Twas but a week ago we met, and then
He tottered so beneath his weight of years,
He scarce could ope the door that guards his cell.

SERVANT.

He seems to walk with pain, and well nigh dropped,
Ere we could bring him to the neighbouring hall.

CALAYNOS.

Admit him then. (*Exit Servant.*) 'Tis near a miracle:
So feeble—

(*Enter* FRIAR GIL.)

FRIAR GIL.

Son, my blessing.

CALAYNOS.

Welcome, Father.
Thou art fatigued and weakened by thy walk.—
What cause has drawn thee from thy cell so far?
Such lengthened walks, to one of thy great age,
Are full of peril. Why not send for me?
Bring a chair, Oliver. (OLIVER *places a chair.*)
So, sit thee down.

FRIAR GIL.

I feared to miss thee; as I lately heard

That thou a journey to Seville design'st:
I came to warn thee from that dangerous step.

CALAYNOS.

Dangerous! What danger do you know or fear?

FRIAR GIL.

None that is certain, every one I fear.

OLIVER.

Ha! here's another seer. (*Aside.*)

CALAYNOS.

Father, thy path through life was long and hard,
And thou hast gathered wisdom by the way;
But this idea is baseless phantasy.

FRIAR GIL.

Hear me, Calaynos! As I lay last night
Sleepless, but why I know not, on my bed,
Telling my beads and thinking o'er my sins,
Thy grandsire, as I saw him ere he left
This castle for Seville, before me stood,

Pointing his hand, through which the moonbeams
shone,
To a great gash beneath his lifted arm;
Then, solemnly and slow, he waved his hand,
As if in warning, towards the castle gate.
I strove to speak; but ere my tongue was loosed,
The melancholy shadow passed away.
So, with the dawn, I rose to seek thee here:
Once turned me back, to 'scape thy lordship's
laugh;
But ere three steps were ta'en, I prostrate fell,
Though the path 'neath me was without a stone.
It seemed the will of Heaven that urged me on,
And gave my feeble frame unwonted strength:
So have I sought thee, though but half in hope,
To overrule thee in this enterprise.

CALAYNOS.

For thy kind zeal I thank thee. 'Twas a dream,
Bred on a superstition of our house,
That to my race Seville brings fated death.

FRIAR GIL.

Has it not been? Did not the one I saw
Fall at Seville, struck by a coward's steel
Over the wine-cup? So thy father thought;
And he did homage by a deputy;
As oft I've heard him say. Go further back;—
All of thy race shunned, like a plague, Seville.
And thou the last of all the mighty line,
The wisest, greatest, without heir or kin,
Wouldst tempt thy fate, though nothing urges thee.

CALAYNOS.

This is a thing at which my reason laughs,
And naught but actual trial can resolve.

FRIAR GIL.

Go, go, thou headstrong man!—nay, I'll not chide,
May God go with thee—I have done my part.
[*Going.*

CALAYNOS.

Farewell! We'll meet again.

FRIAR GIL.

Perhaps—farewell! [*Exit.*

OLIVER.

I hope, my lord, you'll take the Friar's advice.

CALAYNOS.

Take what?—Take hellebore, good Oliver;
For you with Friar Gil have lost your wits.

OLIVER.

I am not superstitious, as you know;
But when I think what greatness hangs on you,
And with your fall how much would be o'erthrown,
I nigh believe that watchful heaven might send
This anxious phantom to avert your ill.

CALAYNOS.

I do not go through stiff-necked stubbornness;
I view these rights of homage to the crown
As a stale pageant better unperformed,
At least by me, who can depute the act.
But in Seville I have a most dear friend,
From whom, till late, I had not heard for years;

And now he writes me in the closest straits,
Saying his lands are forfeit for some debts,
By knavish means imposed upon his hands:
Should the law take its course, his wealth is gone,
And he turned forth in utter beggary.
Some days ago I sent him present aid;
With promise to redeem his lands from pawn,
When at Seville I should the Court attend.

OLIVER.

Let me not balk you in this noble act,
Though instant peril stare us in the face.

CALAYNOS.

He loves not good who turns from it through fear.
O, what a joy is it to have the power
That lifts from want the worthy sufferer!
What double rapture when he calls us friend,
And with that name wipes obligation off!
Out, out!—my heart's afire, till this be done!
Urge on the loiterers—see them all prepared
To start at dawn—our speed shall clip the way!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A street in Seville. Enter* DON LUIS *and* SOTO.

DON LUIS.

Stand here, good Soto; should a dun come by,
Stop the base fellow, ere he gains my door,
With some excuse you are so apt at framing;
But by no means admit him to the house.

SOTO.

My lord, I'll try, if trying can avail.
Of late my stock of lies has run full low,
And all my wares are out of date and stale.
The creditors have got the wind of me,
And strive with tricks to meet my subtlest shifts.
For if I say you're ill, and in your bed;
The fellow vows he is a learned leech,
For whom your lordship sent. If, to the next,
I say you've gone from town to stay a month;

The rogue but asks admittance for a while,
To write a line for you, on your return.
Another comes hot haste, as if a friend,
Pregnant with news which argues you much good:
Another bears a letter from the Court:
Another has a package, stuffed with rags,
As a rare present from a nobleman.
I hear they watch all night the city gates,
For fear you might escape.

DON LUIS.

Then say, that I
Am harboured with a rich, usurious Jew,
Who lends me money on my country-house,
With which I will discharge their claims ere long.

SOTO.

That will scarce do; they have more knowledge got
Of your affairs, of what you hold, what owe,
Of what encumbrances are on the lands,
Than I conceive your lordship can possess.

DON LUIS.

Well, well, but put them off, and I'm content.
I must be gone, the town begins to wake. [*Exit.*

SOTO.

Here's a fine prospect for an airy breakfast!
He thinks I live on moisture from the earth;
So stands me here to take my fill of it.
Were I an ostrich, there's a tender stone,
Soft as my master's heart, on which I'd feed;
But as a Christian man—nay, I'm a saint;
I keep more fasts than all the Calendar:
A little out of time—but what of that?
I'll plead, the Pope has changed the almanac.
Last Friday I ate meat—well, what of that?
Sunday and Monday not a bone saw I.
To fast's the thing—the act, and not the day—
To mortify the flesh, and starve out sin.
Some mortified their flesh on Friday last;
But I chose Sunday—who is better now?
I mortified my flesh as much as they,

Only I took another day to do it.
Lord! who comes here, tricked off in grandad's clothes?
So out of fashion, and so rustical!
But yet the bumpkin has a noble air,
As born for acts above his quality.

(*Enter* OLIVER.)

Ho, there! why stare you thus at every house,
As if you thought the stones could speak to you?
You are a stranger, if I judge aright—
Can I assist you in your patient search?

OLIVER.

Thanks for your courteous speech and kind intent.
In truth, I'm puzzled, in this thick-built town,
To find the single house for which I look.

SOTO.

Whose is the house?

OLIVER.

Don Luis is his name;
On whom my lord intends to call ere long.

SOTO.

Here's a new trick of these cursed creditors!
What will they next? (*Aside.*) What station hold
you, friend,
In your lord's pay?

OLIVER.

His secretary I.

SOTO.

'Tis a good place. I once that office held—
By dint of an inked nail, to recommend—
Under a lord who flits about the Court,
For a good twelve-month. But, alas, one day
He fell in love, and called on me to write,
Then kicked me out of doors.

OLIVER.

Why how was that?

SOTO.

Simple enough—I could not write a line.

OLIVER.

Your impudence but bore its natural fruit.

SOTO.

I thought a courtier's scribe a thing for show—
Part of his state, and not designed for use:
So had it been, had he not fallen in love.

OLIVER.

What station fill you now?

SOTO.

Of every use.
When my lord cannot play at dice or cards,
He kicks me round his room, to pass the time;
Or sets me at some villany, whereby
He may be able to resume his play;
But the chief thing, for which I am employed,
Is an experiment on human stomachs,
To see how little man can eat, and live.—
Are you well fed?

OLIVER.

More than I can consume
Is set before me daily. Did I wish,
I might bolt down an ox, at every meal—

My lord would but admire my appetite.
'Tis a strange knave—I'll lead him further on.
[*Aside.*

SOTO.

Yours is the place for me, could I but write.

OLIVER.

Why not take service with another master?
If, at each meal-time, I became possessed
With the rude fact that I a stomach had,
I'd leave my feeder.

SOTO.

So would I, in fact;
But certain services I've done my lord,
Unfit me for the change—so people think.
Is your lord rich?

OLIVER.

The richest man in Spain.

SOTO.

What wages have you?

OLIVER.

All he has is mine,
Were I disposed to use 't.

SOTO.

He's generous!

OLIVER.

Free as the air, which all alike may breathe.
He never dreams that man would wrong his bounty.

SOTO.

His name?

OLIVER.

Calaynos.

SOTO.

Fiends and furies seize me!
Why did I talk this way about Don Luis?
All the town knows it—he must hear it soon;
But yet he may not, if we manage right. [*Aside.*
What man of lordly gait now hither comes?
By his brave port, a more than common man.

OLIVER.

That is my lord Calaynos. Can you tell
Where this Don Luis dwells, for whom we search?

SOTO.

Down yonder street. . . I must be off apace,
To give Don Luis timely note of this.—
O, what a fool, to slander thus my master! [*Aside.*
[*Exit running.*

OLIVER.

Ho, fellow, stop!

(*Enter* CALAYNOS.)

CALAYNOS.

Why do you call so loud?

OLIVER.

I held discourse with one of those poor knaves,
Whom the world forms to play at foot-ball with—
A rascal by compulsion, not by nature;
With something good beneath his villany,
Turned all awry by outward circumstance.
The knave had much intelligence and wit,

Appeared acquainted with this mazy town,
And seemed to know where good Don Luis dwells;
But ere I pressed him past an empty hint,
The fellow fled as if a fiend pursued.

CALAYNOS.

So, then, you have not found Don Luis' house.
What hint gave your companion of my friend?

OLIVER.

He pointed widely down yon narrow street,
But to no single house. I must inquire.

CALAYNOS.

Come, I will aid you; thus may we save time;
For I am sick of every thing I see.
In this huge city virtue is close housed,
And dares not show her face for very shame;
While vice and folly, like two brazen drunkards,
Reel up and down the streets from morn till eve,
Bullying the peaceful passers with their threats.
Pah! what a purge of country air 't will need
To drive this festering sickness from my brain!

I nigh had fallen in hatred with mankind,
By looking, with too curious eyes, upon
The wrecked and rotting souls that here abound.
We must shut eyes and ears, good Oliver,
Or we'll go home two railing misanthropes.
Come, let us on; and, when we find my friend,
We will have plucked at least one precious pearl
From out this sea of misery and vice! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A room in Don Luis' *house.* Don Luis *alone.*

DON LUIS.

All the supply of gold Calaynos sent,
At length has dwindled to a single coin—
Curse on my luck! the cards will never change.
By heaven, I swear! if ever I grow rich—
By some unthought of chance, unborn as yet—
I'll shun all gambling from that very hour.

But, being ruined, I must needs play on—
For what wise gamester ever stopped in loss?—
Hoping, by lucky change, to win all back
With double interest—fortune's usury.
'Tis villanous! for me, a gentleman,
To be thus kenneled like a dangerous cur;
Shut up by day, to prowl abroad at night,
And forage scantly on my neighbour's fold.
[*Knocking.*
Who's there?

SOTO. (*Without.*)
Unbar the door. 'Tis I, my lord.

(DON LUIS *opens the door.* *Enter* SOTO.)

DON LUIS.
You, Soto? Pray what brings you back so soon?

SOTO.
Good news, my lord, up to your highest wish!
The wealthy friend, of whom you lately spoke,
Is in Seville, and seeking for your house.

DON LUIS.
Why not conduct him hither, dull-brained dog?

SOTO.

And mar your plot! No, I'm too old for that.
I threw him off the scent, and ran with speed
To warn you, senior, how to take the man.
You told me that you two so long had been,
By place and time oblivious, unknit,
That he no spot within your memory held.
Now, by some words his secretary dropped,
And by the outward bearing of the man,
I deem him one for noble actions fit—
A generous mind, above suspicion quite;
Yet with an eye that looks through outward things
Into the soul, if once aroused to doubt:
Therefore be wary.

DON LUIS.

Fear me not, good Soto.
You've shown a shrewdness that I dreamed not of.

SOTO.

But above all, beware the man of ink—
A kind of humble friend to great Calaynos;

More of a worldly turn than is his master:
He might walk safely o'er the roughest path,
While his lord tripped by gazing at the stars.
You may betray the lord before his eyes,
But not the secretary, on my life. [*Knocking.*

DON LUIS.

Heard you a knocking? To the window, quick!

SOTO. (*Looking out.*)

They've come, the two, his lordship and the scribe:
Looking like hares before a tempting trap.—
Shall I go down, and let the conies in?

DON LUIS.

Ay, quickly—shut your mouth, you grinning knave!
[*Exit* SOTO.
Now for another step in villany—
Pshaw, pshaw, no scruples! I have left the path
Which leads to good, so far from where I stand,
That all return is worse than hopeless now.
What if I should confess? Would he forgive?
No, he would shun me like a spotted lazar.
What tells me to confess?—Some mocking fiend,

That fain would snatch the prize within my grasp.
It cannot be—I was not formed for good;
To what fate orders I must needs submit:
The sin not mine, but His who framed me thus—
Not in my will but in my nature lodged.
Since I'm a devil, I've no choice of fate;
But must achieve the purpose of my being.
Therefore away, ye cheating phantasies!
That would decoy me from the thing I'd clutch,
Then leave me poor, and wickeder than ever.
He is a fool who acts not for himself;
A worse than fool, who chases airy virtue,
And gains but knocks and hatred for reward.
Yes, I will grasp the stable goods of life,
Nor care how foul the hand that does the deed.
Hark! they are coming—actor, to thy part!

(*Enter* CALAYNOS, OLIVER, *and* SOTO. DON LUIS *and* CALAYNOS *embrace apart.* OLIVER *and* SOTO *advance.*)

OLIVER.

You here! and pray, my friend, how came you hither?

SOTO.

This is our house; and there my master stands,
Doing his duty to your lord Calaynos.
The house is small, and scant of furniture;
But you'll find rich apartments in our hearts,
Where you may lodge until the walls decay.

OLIVER.

What, he your lord! You're surely jesting me;
You made me think, but half an hour ago,
Your lord the chiefest villain in Seville;
Called him a common gamester; said he lived
By cheatery of all kinds and qualities!
But sure Don Luis is a worthy man,
You a deceiving trickster.

SOTO.

So I said:
But I'm the greatest liar in Seville;
A bastard born, and therefore false by nature.
My family, sir, before me, all were liars;
'Tis an infection that invades our blood;

For which I'm bound no more, than is a king
For the bright crown that tops his august brows—
Coming by course of nature, not desert!
I love to lie; 'tis nought but romance making,
Spoken, not writ—for I'm too poor to print.
I could tell tales would make Quevedo stare—
But not malicious ones; and if believed,
How proud am I, as proving truth to nature.
I was but practising on you my art—
See how you stare, what admiration show!
Here's glory for an author, quits my pains.
Yet have I done my lord no grain of harm,
Now all the lie is out. Poor, honest man!—
Why, sir, his honesty brought on these straits.

OLIVER.

Cease, you mad dog; perchance you're lying now.

SOTO.

Not I; you here may trust me without fear;
Beneath this roof I do not dare to lie.
True as the book—I'm ever on the watch. [*Aside.*

(SOTO *retires.*)

OLIVER.

I half suspect, this fellow told the truth
When first we met. I do not like the looks
Of him he calls his master, yon Don Luis.
Then the unnatural boast about his lying—
It may be so ; for I have known some men
Who'd boast of crime, as if they spoke of virtue ;
And hang their sins out, as for ornament,
Merely to make the wondering audience stare.
The morbid wish to be observed of men,
Makes heroes of our dying criminals,
And adds a goad to crime. But yet I'll watch ;—
This limping story does not satisfy. [*Retires.*

(CALAYNOS *and* DON LUIS *advance.*)

CALAYNOS.

So, poor companion, thou art hunted down
By these base creditors ; thy house besieged,
Thy actions spied, sweet liberty infringed—
God's very air thy troubled bosom breathes,
Shut up in this close mansion. Why not write,

Ere hardship fell upon thee? Why not fly,
And seek me out among my native hills,
Where I with open arms had welcomed thee!

DON LUIS.

It was with fear that I disclosed my state,
Half doubting this return from even thee:
For we were sundered in the May of youth,
Nor since have held communion. Ah, I thought
Thou, like my other friends, hadst callous grown
'Neath the petrific waves of hardening time.

CALAYNOS.

How thou didst wrong me!

DON LUIS.

Wronged thee, noble man!
Yes, I can ne'er forgive the thoughts I bore
'Gainst thee, and 'gainst the race of man entire.
For I have stood at bay before the world,
Facing the wolves that wellnigh pulled me down;
Until I deemed mankind a hungry pack,
Eager to suck their wounded brother's blood.

But thou hast come to purge me of my gall,
To heal my wounded heart, to dry my tears,
And plant within my soul a love for man,
Which, by Heaven's grace, wrong never shall uproot.

CALAYNOS.

Dost thou remember, Luis, when we sat
Remote from men, yet planned to mankind good?
What dreams we dreamed, what projects grave we formed,
To guide our lives when we to manhood came?
And thou wert ever first in these designs—
Formed broader projects—gave a greater scope
To thy sweet fancy, than thy backward friend:
And wast thou first to plan these goodly deeds,
Yet last to bear them out? Ah me, I fear
The sprouts of fancy most luxuriant shoot
In shallowest soils; and, when most forward seeming,
Oft-times but weak of root!

DON LUIS.

It so has seemed.
Calaynos, hadst thou borne what I have borne.
Thou wouldst not be so gracious to mankind.
Thou hast been nursed in wealth and luxury,
Thy every wish been father to the deed;
Thou, from o'erflowing means, hast freely given
That which it cost thee nothing to impart:
But I, through bad men's acts, have fallen from wealth,
Nor know one day if I may feed the next;
So that the coin which I a beggar give,
A moment wavers 'tween his need and mine.

CALAYNOS.

Luis, you know not of the years I've spent,
In patient study and unwearying search,
To learn the wants of man. I have digged down
Into the very roots and springs of things:
All moral systems, all philosophies,
All that the poet or historian wrote,

All hints from lighter books, all common sayings—
The current coin of wisdom 'mong mankind—
Time-hallowed truths, and lies which seem like truths,
I have turned o'er, before my mental eye,
Seeking a guide might lead me on to good;
And find, the chiefest springs of happiness
Are faith in Heaven, and love to all mankind.

DON LUIS.

This is a noble creed, above my reach—
A creed for one in ease and affluence;
Better in speculation than in deed.

CALAYNOS.

Not so; and thou shalt go, poor brain-sick man,
Far from these scenes, to heal thy wounded mind.
Beneath my roof shalt thou forget thy cares;
And time's soft plumes will brush thy tears away;
While I within thee may implant a faith,
Shall bear thee safely through this faithless world.

DON LUIS.

Thou art too good to one not worth thy love.

CALAYNOS.

Leave that to me. But of the creditors;
I long to stuff their hungry maws with gold.
Send for them quickly.

DON LUIS.

Nay, I'll go myself.
A walk to me is a rare luxury.

CALAYNOS.

Well then, we'll seek them.

DON LUIS.

Nay, I'll bring them here.
Repose awhile; I will return with speed.
[*Exit hastily.*

OLIVER. (*Advancing.*)

How fell Don Luis to such poverty?

CALAYNOS.

By the connivance of some common knaves,

Who gained his name to certain bonds and deeds
Of a vile tool of theirs, that played his friend.

SOTO.

Two scurvy knaves, two knaves of clubs and spades,
Took the last real he could call his own. [*Aside.*

OLIVER. (*Drawing* CALAYNOS *away from* SOTO.)

This shows a lack of wisdom on his part.

CALAYNOS.

Nay, Oliver, it shows a trusting mind,
Pure from suspicion, a most guileless mind.
He is a man whose loving heart was bruised
By acts of one, whom most of all he loved.
For this, I quite forgive his bitterness.

OLIVER.

A man like him, reared in a crafty town,
With his acuteness, was too easily ta'en
By a most shallow and most bare-faced trick.

CALAYNOS.

Suspect you aught? What, sir, you do suspect!

OLIVER.

And I have grounds.

CALAYNOS.

Rash boy, restrain your tongue!
Or that might follow which you may repent.
I tell you he is pure as yon bright sun.
Knaves flourish and grow rich; look round you here;
Does this poor house show aught of prosperous crime?
If he were wealthy, and o'erblown with pride,
I'd listen to the silly words you speak.
I knew him from a child, you catch a glance;
And yet you tell me, as a trader would,
This gold is counterfeit! These words of yours
Savour of cunning low, and not of wisdom.
Yet never seek to sprinkle in mine ear
Your worldly gall! What I will do, I will!
Nor you, and all the world—

OLIVER.

My lord, my lord!

CALAYNOS.

Pardon me, Oliver; thy wish was good,
And towards my interest aimed, though shot awry.
Think not of what I said. Let us go in:
There is a couch; I would repose awhile.

[*Exeunt* CALAYNOS *and* OLIVER.

SOTO.

Lord! what an actor has my master grown!
It takes a gentleman to lie complete.
I'm but a blunderer to this mighty man;
Who lies by rule, is armed at every point,
Ready for each conjecture. 'Tis a system
To which an humble man can ne'er attain.
I do not like that secretary's air:
He is too shrewd; and has a busy brain,
That ever seeks for plots and deep deceits
In all he looks at. For a rustic born,
The fellow's wise enough; but what a fool,

What a poor, generous, trusting dolt his lord!
Here's a fine subject for the Don to fleece!
Why, we'll grow rich on him, regain our state,
And flourish bravely, as we did of old.—
But I must warn Don Luis, once again,
To keep an eye upon the cunning scribe. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A street in front of the Exchange. Enter four USURERS, *meeting.*

FIRST USURER.

What is the news on 'Change?

SECOND USURER.

Of great import.
'Tis said the Court to-morrow leaves Seville;
When all the chiefest gentlemen of Spain,
Nobles and commons, follow it of course.

THIRD USURER.

Half of our business gone! That's news enough

To break one's heart. How slow are fortunes made!
Here I've been labouring, for a score of years,
With scarce a pittance for my daily toil.

SECOND USURER.

O, that comes well from you, who could nigh buy
A noble dukedom with one half your means.

FOURTH USURER.

They say the plague is coming here again—
That the French king is to a war inclined—
I heard Don Luis sawed his head half off,
With a dull knife, to cheat us creditors.

FIRST USURER.

That's sure a lie; for here Don Luis comes.

THIRD USURER.

Nor tries to shun us! What does this portend?

(*Enter* DON LUIS.)

DON LUIS.

Good day my friends.

USURERS.

Good day, good senior.

DON LUIS.

My friends, I do not wish you should bear loss,
By the large loans which you have each advanced;
So, by your leave, to-day I'll pay the debts,
On slight conditions which you'll not deny.
I have a friend in town, of ample wealth,
Who'll settle all, without a real's loss,
If you keep silent; nor, by word or deed,
Say aught of me, or why I raised the loans,
Or how I brought myself to poverty.
And should he ask for what I owe these sums,
You'll say that for a friend a bond I signed,
Whose treacherous flight makes me responsible.
Are you agreed? Say yes or no: if no,
Your only chance for pay is lost.

FIRST USURER.

My lord,
You are too sudden; give us time for thought.

DON LUIS. (*Apart to* SECOND USURER.)

Come hither, sir. You are of gentle blood,
And, therefore, know what feelings cling to rank;
Nor would you shame, by an incautious word,
A gentleman who loves you for your birth.
I trust your honour; knowing that I lean
On that which might uphold a monarch's throne.
You'll not betray the secret which I leave,
With purest faith, entrusted to your hands.
A breath of yours might mar my state for aye,
And blot a noble family from the land,
To which you are of kin—though distantly.

SECOND USURER.

Racks shall not wring it from me!

DON LUIS.

I'm content.
The pompous fool! his race cleaned boots for ages.
[*Aside.*

SECOND USURER. (*Aside.*)

There's birth and breeding—there's a gentleman!
Called me his cousin—He may trust till doom!
[*Retires.*

DON LUIS (*to* FIRST USURER).

I'd speak a word apart with you, my friend.

FIRST USURER.

What would your lordship ?

DON LUIS.

You're a prudent man ;
And would not lose your loan by empty words—
Words which may do me harm, but you no good :
Therefore if you desire to use the gold,
I charge you give no hint of my affairs
To him who pays the debt. Men call you wise,
And say you gained your wealth by strictest silence.

FIRST USURER.

Trust me, my lord ; 'tis not my wont to prate
When any monied business is concerned. [*Retires.*

DON LUIS (*to* THIRD USURER).

Hither, you jackal ! List to what I say !
If you reveal, why I'm in debt to you,
Or say a word of interest or its rate,
Or how I raised the loan, I'll blow a storm

Shall drive you naked from Seville to-night!
There's a young nobleman, a gay Don Juan,
With whom in trade you were concerned of late—
Look to 't! And if you dare to blab a word,
His father, old Alfonso, shall know more,
Before to-night, than what he dreamed this morn!

THIRD USURER.

Good heavens! you know—

DON LUIS.

Nought that I wish to tell.
I have the whip-hand of you—by the gods,
I'll make you smoke if you prove restive now!

THIRD USURER.

Fear not, my lord.

DON LUIS.

Nay, nay; fear me, you leech!

THIRD USURER. (*Aside.*)

How knows he this? (*Retires.*)

DON LUIS (*to* FOURTH USURER).

Come here, you trembling slave!
If you by word, or look, or act, or sign,
Or hesitating speech, or stammering tongue,
Wise looks, or shrugs—which seem to hide a thought—
Give any token that you know me else
Than as a poor but worthy gentleman,
Who suffers through misfortune, not through fault—
If you act thus, by yon bright heaven, I swear
I'll drive my dagger half way down your throat!

FOURTH USURER.

Good lord, you would not kill me!

DON LUIS.

Kill you, rogue?
Ay, and throw out your carcass to the dogs;
Thinking I'd done the world a charity!

FOURTH USURER.

Dear senior, I'll be quiet as a mouse.

DON LUIS.

Look to yourself; my eye will be on you.

(*Turns to all the* USURERS.)

Follow me, masters; if you have resolved
To act as I proposed.

USURERS.

We have, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A room in DON LUIS' *house.* CALAYNOS *and* OLIVER.

CALAYNOS.

What, not yet rid of your suspicious thoughts?
Pray cast them off, as unbecoming things,
Unworthy to consume the idle time
Which you will waste in entertaining them.
Suspicious men are like those slinking curs,
That whine and fly, if we but show the lash,
And suffer torture ere they feel a blow.
If you will nourish them, I promise you

Enough of food to rear your nurslings on;
For you will strain and twist his every act,
To confirmation of your worst suspicions.
A falling straw shall make you swear him false,
An idle word shall damn him past reclaim;
Though he, poor man, be innocent of crime,
And all the guilt be harboured in your breast.
I'd as soon be a conscience-hunted felon,
As one pursued by packs of phantasies!

OLIVER.

My lord, for you, I'll try to love your friend;
But you will pardon, if with poor success.
When first I saw him, a cold shudder ran
From head to foot; the while my faint heart thumped,
Like a great weight, against its prison house.
And when he strained you in his close embrace,
I'd rather 've seen a tiger mount your breast.
You half believe in these antipathies,
Which tell, like instinct, of some coming ill;

For you are firm of faith in sympathies,
Which prove, if they exist, their opposites.

CALAYNOS.

Cease, Oliver; we cannot harmonise.
I will not doubt him till I find him false.

OLIVER.

Will give me leave to ask the creditors,
Unknown to him, how in their debt he grew?

CALAYNOS.

Yes, for your own repose; I'd have you friends;
If that will satisfy, you have my leave.
Now to your writings; here Don Luis comes.

(*Enter* DON LUIS *and the* USURERS.)

DON LUIS (*apart to* CALAYNOS).

Here are the creditors; pray treat them fair:
'Twill but make foes to chide them for their wrongs;
And, as thou know'st, I've enemies enough.

CALAYNOS.

As you think fit. Come hither, gentlemen,
And give your papers to my secretary;
He will write orders for their settlement.
[*To the* USURERS.

(CALAYNOS *and* DON LUIS *talk apart.* OLIVER *seats himself at a table.*)

OLIVER.

This is a large amount for one man's bond. [*Aside.*
What usury did good Don Luis pay?
[*To the* USURERS.

FIRST USURER.

'Twas not by usury he came in debt.
'Twas by a bond which he endorsed for one,
Who raised the gold, and then proved false to him.

OLIVER.

But where's the bond? When paid 't must be erased.

FIRST USURER (*apart to the others*).

The devil! here's a strait! What shall we say?

DON LUIS. (*Advancing.*)

What is the matter with you, gentlemen?

FIRST USURER.

Senior, the secretary wants your bond,
Which we forgot to bring.

DON LUIS.

Nay, nay, not so;
'Twas put into my hands as we came here.
You gave it, did you not? (*To* FOURTH USURER.)

FOURTH USURER.

I did, my lord.

(DON LUIS *retires.*)

OLIVER.

Baffled! and yet 'tis strange! These creditors
Take up their pay, as if they felt no shame;
Which, were the action guilty, they should show.
[*Aside.*

(*Turns to the* FOURTH USURER.)

Why, sirrah, what a curséd knave are you,
To grasp your cheatings with so meek a face!
You've done a deed might bring you to the oar.
You, and your fellows, should march two by two,

With iron chains around your villain necks,
To seek the hulks—by dint of conscience driven.—
You slimy swindler—you vile cozener!

FOURTH USURER.

Why is it wrong to lend—

(DON LUIS *advances, playing with his dagger hilt.*)

to lend—to lend—

OLIVER.

To lend what, rascal?

DON LUIS.

Lend my house your room.
[*To* FOURTH USURER.
Have you not paid these men, my gentle friend?
[*To* OLIVER.

OLIVER.

I have, sir.

DON LUIS (*to* USURERS).

Gentlemen, you may depart. [*Exeunt* USURERS.

OLIVER. (*Aside.*)

Here was a struggle; but he bore it off;

A moment more, that silly knave had blabbed.
Yon man is guilty, though I have no proof.
I'll seem his friend, but watch him like a foe—
Heaven grant, thereby, I keep my lord from harm!
[*Retires.*

(CALAYNOS *and* DON LUIS *advance.*)

DON LUIS.

My noble friend, what service hast thou done
To one unworthy of thy least regard!
How like a dew, thy gentle acts have fallen
On that dry waste, my scarred and thirsting heart!
O, may the blessings of a grateful mind
Rise up in prayers to Heaven, like evening mists,
To fall on thee in balmy freshening showers,
Dropped from His hand who smiles on kindly deeds!
I'll love my former sufferings from this hour;
Since, through my pain, thou hast such rapture wrought.

CALAYNOS.

Cease, cease! Thy words have overpaid the act;

If thou proceed'st, thou plungest me in debt;
Such gratitude doth shame my blushing gold.
But, Luis, to this corner of thy heart,
Warmed with the heat of friendship's holy flame,
Take not thy friend, unless thou'lt take mankind;
And, for the love of one, love all his race:—
Many are worthier of regard than I.

DON LUIS.

I think not so: but thou shalt use my heart
As a poor mansion, over which thou rulest:
If so thou will'st, call in thy dearest friends;
They shall be welcome, though they're all mankind.

CALAYNOS.

And now make ready to depart with me.—
I long to have thee breathe my native air,
And share such pleasures as my home affords.

DON LUIS.

An hour, and I'll be ready. [*Exit.*

CALAYNOS.

Oliver.

OLIVER.

My lord.

CALAYNOS.

Collect the train; we must be gone.

OLIVER.

How soon?—To-day?

CALAYNOS.

Within an hour, at most.

OLIVER.

It can be done.

CALAYNOS.

Then haste; your time is brief. [*Exit.*

OLIVER.

Confusion! He departs with such hot speed,
I'll not have time to see the creditors.
I purposed to untwist this tangled skein—
To free the Don, or to confirm his guilt:
But this unthought of haste o'erturns my scheme,
And leaves me wandering 'mid my doubts and fears. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A room in* CALAYNOS' *Castle.* DOÑA ALDA.

DOÑA ALDA.

O, weary, weary days, how slow ye pass!
Flow on, flow on, and bring Calaynos home!
Yet why should I desire my lord's return?
His presence makes small difference to me:
Shut up in his dim study, pondering o'er
The yellow leaves of the most learned dead,
Short time he gives to me; and when he comes,
With stately step and quiet, solemn eyes,
He chills the joy that from my heart would burst,
With a most dreary smile, near like a sigh.
Yet I do love him, or I think I do—
Pale, melancholy man, thy godlike mind
Was rather formed for multitudes to praise,
Than for a woman's individual love

To spend its wayward feelings on, unawed.
No change, no change! Can I be happy here—
I, running o'er with the hot blood of youth,
Eager for action, sick of dull repose,
That rusts my spirit with unburnished rest?—
I happy! plodding an unvarying round
Of sullen days, that slowly crawl to years?—
My life is like a dammed and sluggish pool,
Topped with a scum of foul, green discontent,
Which loads my breast, and keeps the sunlight off.

(*A horn sounds. Enter* MARTINA.)

What means that sound?

MARTINA.

The warder blew the blast;
Your lord and train approach the castle gate.
What quick return from dear Seville he makes:
Had I been he, I'd staid from home a year.

DOÑA ALDA.

'Tis a strange taste, his love for these old walls:
He oft has said, he passes not an hour,
Which he calls happy, when away from them.

MARTINA.

Lord! lady, what a speech! Were he well bred,
He'd say, from you no happy hour was passed.
You were included in the walls, I deem,
With sundry other scraps of furniture—
I hate a man who rolls in self-content,
And needs no one to help his happiness!

DOÑA ALDA.

You hate my lord?

MARTINA.

O no, my lady dear.
I spoke, as we unthinking women do,
In o'erstrained phrase, that means not what it says.

DOÑA ALDA.

In the brief letter, I last night received,
He writes, a much-loved friend returns with him,
To share what sports our castle can afford.

MARTINA.

What sports! What sports?—To see the half-bred
Moors

Dance, to their pagan drums, on Baptist's day;
And howl and rave, as if the maw of hell
Had cast its devils up to mar our earth!
These are the only sports. The holidays,
Except Saint John's, go off with moody shows,
Which wellnigh make a Christian woman weep.
Who is the friend?

DOÑA ALDA.

I know not: a young man;
But yet not named.—How old do you suppose him?

MARTINA.

Thirty in years, and yet a century old!
A heart dried up, like one of Egypt's mummies,
All balmed and spiced in rare philosophy;
A spindle-shanked, lean-visaged, red-eyed youth,
With a most rickety and crooked back,
That got its set o'er Plato; one who fears
To look a pretty woman in the face,
Who would begin his prayers if one came near,

Who with his senses has not lived a day,
Yet ages with his brains.

DOÑA ALDA.

And I suppose,
A man much like my lord, of earnest mien,
Of grave and reverend looks—incarnate wisdom
Made manifest and pure in earthly form—
A man without a sin, or fault, or stain:
Such must he be, whom lord Calaynos loves.

MARTINA.

Would he had brought a gallant gentleman,
Such as adorns the splendid Court of Spain!
A man all smiles and service to us women;
Faultless in dress, with a light, dashing air
That wins his way to every lady's heart;
A man of wit, in conversation apt,
Ready in trifles, with a thorough knowledge
Of all the little things which women love;
One who can talk of China, or of cats—
Of furs, or frills—of lace, or Cashmere shawls—

And be as learned and absolute in these,
As is your lord in metaphysic's lore:
That were a proper man—a man of fashion—
A man of feeling, delicate, refined;
Not a great clumsy, learnéd elephant!

DOÑA ALDA.

Hark! they are coming.—Get you in, Martina.

MARTINA.

I'll pass this way; for I must see the guest. [*Exit.*

CALAYNOS. (*Without.*)

Is Doña Alda here?

MARTINA. (*Without.*)

She is, my lord.

(*Enter* CALAYNOS, DON LUIS, OLIVER, *and* SOTO.)

DOÑA ALDA. (*Embracing* CALAYNOS.)

Welcome, my lord.

CALAYNOS.

Dear Alda, in thy joy,
Thou hast forgot the guest I bring to thee;

A guest, and therefore to be welcomed first—
A friend, and therefore to be welcomed warmly.

DOÑA ALDA. (*To* DON LUIS.)

Pardon me, senior, if I once offend
The courtesy a lady owes her guest.
'Tis the first parting we have e'er endured;
Therefore our meeting is a strange delight,
New and most grateful. You are welcome, sir,
Both as a guest, and as my husband's friend.

DON LUIS.

Ask me no pardon, where is no offence.—
Your double welcome I accept at heart,
And pray 't may have a long continuance.
How beautiful she is!—Heavens, what a gem
This barbarous castle has shut up in it! [*Aside.*
Why came you not, fair lady, to Seville?—
The Court was there, and all was gayety,
Which lacked but you to make the joy complete.

DOÑA ALDA.

The very man whom last Martina drew. [*Aside.*
'Twas not his will. (*Pointing to* CALAYNOS.)

DON LUIS.

Ah, then you wished to come?

DOÑA ALDA.

My lord's will is my wish.

DON LUIS.

Most dutiful!
Would that all ladies could be taught by you—
'Twould save us aches!

DOÑA ALDA. (*To* CALAYNOS.)

My lord, we'll share thy thoughts.

CALAYNOS.

Nay, note me not. I must retire awhile. [*Exit.*

DOÑA ALDA.

Perhaps 'twould please you, sir, to view the castle?
No customary qualities it lacks,
Which dignify all huge and antique piles.
On every oaken door and painted window
There rests a legend, magnified by time;
Each tower is tenanted, at evil hours,

By other forms than walk its floors by day;
No stone but has its story. Some are gay,
Some grotesque, some are sad, some horrible.
I'll tell you but the cheerful—shall we walk?

DON LUIS.

Ay, like the Sultan of the Eastern tale,
I'll list a thousand nights with eager ears. [*Exeunt.*

(OLIVER *and* SOTO *advance.*)

SOTO.

This is a fine old castle—somewhat musty.

OLIVER.

Ay, 'tis the mustiest mansion in all Spain.
This castle my lord's race inhabited
Beyond all date.

SOTO.

How did they in the flood?

OLIVER.

O, they were fishes then, and swam unchoked.
They were advancing from their primal slime—

Hatched by the sun on some wide river's bank—
Through worms, fish, frogs, and beasts, upward to men.
They lived here monkeys, till their tails wore off,
Then became Moors, and last you find them thus.
I'll scare these villains from their base designs;
They'll fear my presence, though they blind my lord. [*Aside.*

SOTO.

Why here's a pedigree for potentates!
That's why they quarter beasts upon their shields;
Relations they to all these rampant brutes.
Friend, I shall dread to kill the next mad dog,
For fear I spill some near relation's blood.

OLIVER.

Fear you to kill a fox! You were a fox—
A cunning, sly, most guilty-minded fox;
Your master was a wolf, a dangerous wolf,
And you, sly fox, were his first counsellor.—
Fear to slay foxes, Soto!

SOTO.

What mean you, sir?

OLIVER.

Merely that men were one time animals.
My master was a lion, king of beasts;
And you two, fox and wolf, once stole his crown,
And thought to wear it.

SOTO.

Friend, you speak in riddles.

OLIVER.

O no, in fables I.

SOTO.

Speak plainer, Æsop!

OLIVER.

I was a dog, a faithful, patient cur,
And watched my master while his eyes were closed;—
For you had given the king a sleeping draught,
Made of a flower called friendship—falsely called!

I slew the fox and wolf, regained the crown,
And placed the golden circle on his brow :—
Now, in the fable, see what beast was I ! [*Exit.*

SOTO.

This fellow looks through both of us like glass :
He's keener than my lord, and wiser far.
Some sunny day, we'll both pitch o'er these walls,
And he will be the man that breaks our necks.
Ah ! 'tis a sad thing, Soto, very sad,
To be knave's knave, e'en though he be a Don !
To take the peril, and do all the work,
Then, at the last, come in for all the kicks.
My lord must know the fable which I heard—
He'll sleep the lighter for it, on my life ! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Another room in the castle. Enter DOÑA ALDA *and* DON LUIS.

DON LUIS.

Pray, noble lady, how do you kill time?
The constant sameness of a country life
Must, sometimes, bear with weight on your high spirit.

DOÑA ALDA.

Kill time, kill time! Ne'er breathe those words again—
At least not where my lord Calaynos hears,
If on his good opinion you set store.
He uses time, as usurers do their gold,
Making each moment pay him double interest;
He sighs o'er what in slumber is consumed;
Robs the lead-lidded god of many an hour,
To swell his heaping stores of curious learning.

DON LUIS.

I hope my words no treason to your ears;
I thought not, gentle lady, to offend.
But I have lived in cities, from my birth,
Where all was noise, and life, and varying scene—
Recurrent news which set all men agape—
New faces, and new friends, and shows, and revels,
Mingled in constant action and quick change,
Which things drive on the wheels of time apace;
Nor, but for scanty periods, have I known
The changeless round of a calm country life.
I have not weighed my minutes in fine scales,
As lapidaries do the diamond's dust;
Content am I to wear life's blazing gem,
Nor care what fragments fall in polishing.

DOÑA ALDA.

I have not passed my life in gayeties;
Duties, not pleasures, have filled up my days.
My lord's domain is large, and peopled thick;
Though most are prosperous, some are old, some poor:

Those that can hither come, I here relieve;
But the more feeble I ride forth to seek,
Freighted with goods which ease their present wants.
Sometimes, I read old books of chivalry,
And fill my wandering brain with idle fears
Of dwarfs, enchanters, giants, eldridge knights,
That throng the crowded world of old romance.
Sometimes, I prattle with my town-bred maid,
A girl of wit, who longs to see Seville,
And has so filled my ears with her desire,
That I'd fain go, if but to still her tongue.
Then there are household duties infinite,
Known but to women, which I must discharge.

DON LUIS.

So then, at times you are an almoner,
At times a romance-reader, next a housewife.
These are grave things to spend a life upon!
But where's Calaynos in this catalogue?—
Does he not cheer you, in your mournful tasks?

. . .

DOÑA ALDA.

Are you his friend, and ask me this of him?
He is a scholar of the strictest caste;
And from the portal of yon study dim,
Seldom comes forth, and then but for a moment.
He is a man of grave and earnest mind,
Wrapped up in things beyond my range of thought;
Of a warm heart, yet with a sense of duty—
As how he must employ his powerful mind—
That drives all empty trifles from his brain,
And bends him sternly o'er his solemn tasks.
Things nigh impossible are plain to him:
His trenchant will, like a fine-tempered blade,
With unturned edge, cleaves through the baser iron.—
Such is my lord, a man above mankind.

DON LUIS.

And can you feel companionship with him,
An intellectual demi-god, removed
From all the sympathies that mark our race?

Can your warm woman's heart outpour its griefs,
Or share its gladness, with a soul like his?
Can you unbidden leap upon his breast,
And laugh or weep, as suits your forward mood?
He must despise all smiles, and mock all tears:
Serene, and cold, and calm—an ice-crowned peak,
Towering supreme amid thought's frozen clouds,
Above the thaws that flood our vales of life.

DOÑA ALDA.

You're talking of my husband.

DON LUIS.

Of my friend.
Let me be your friend, lady, I beseech.
I fain would see you live in happiness;
And his strange coldness cannot bring you peace.

DOÑA ALDA.

Husband and wife need not a go-between.
I did not say I lived unhappily;
Nor that Calaynos wanted in his love.
Senior, you take wild license with my speech,

To twist its meaning to so base an end.
I love him, he loves me.

DON LUIS.

Your pardon, madam.
'Twas but the share I take in all affairs,
Wherein my friends are mixed. I meant not ill;
Nor, willingly, your harmless words would wrest
To any sinister or false intent.
'Twas a mistake; but such a one might hap
In the warm heart of any loving friend.

DOÑA ALDA.

Well-meaning ill the generous must forgive.
When next we meet, beware how you uprake
The slumbering ashes in the fane of love;
Lest you come off with withered hands!—farewell.
[*Exit.*

DON LUIS.

Farewell, thou type of beauty, whom I'll win—
Farewell, thou guileless seat of embryo love—
Farewell, thou temple of my burning heart—

Thou thief of honour—thou enchantress fair!
Who hast upset my nature by thine art,
And killed the latest seeds of good in me.
Farewell, all gratitude, and friendship's trust!
Come, smiling sin, and pour thy honied words
On tongue and lips, but in my heart pour gall!—
Come thin-robed sin, that show'st thy loveliness,
But hid'st thy wickedness and keen remorse!
That I may win my love, and hate her lord—
O, when had love a conscience or a fear! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The study of CALAYNOS. CALAYNOS *reading*, OLIVER *transcribing a manuscript.*

OLIVER. (*Rising.*)

My lord, this learned manuscript has raised
A crowd of strange conjectures in my mind,
That rush and jostle through my wildered brain,
In wild confusion, without settled purpose.

CALAYNOS. (*Rising.*)

What part stirred up this riot in your head?

OLIVER.

That part in which it hints at God's design
In the creation of the earth and man.
I oft have wondered how omniscient God
Could take delight in forming things like men:
So full of meanness, yet so full of pride—
So strong in thought, and yet so weak in act—
So foul in nature, so o'ergrown with sin,
Yet destined for a sphere 'neath Him alone.
What pleasure finds He in our paltry deeds,
Begot of selfishness and headstrong will?
What feeling moves Him, when the puny thing
Lifts up its voice, and boldly rails at Him?
How deems He, when He sees the myriad souls
That speed to death—their destiny forgot,
The purpose of their being unachieved—
Seeking, unawed, a hell of their own choosing?
Why did He form so fair a stage as this,

To dance His trifling puppet, man, upon?
And last, does not this whole creation seem
'Neath His contempt, so far above it He?

CALAYNOS.

Stop, Oliver; you tread on dangerous ground,
A mental bog, that quakes beneath your feet.
These words would seem to come from humbleness,
And low opinion of yourself and man;
Yet are engendered by the rankest pride,
Arrayed in robes of meek humility—
Stop! the next step is infidelity.
Contempt for man begets contempt for God:
He who hates man, must scorn the Source of man,
And challenge, as unwise, his awful Maker.
The next step doubt; and then comes unbelief.
Last, you raise man above all else besides,
And make him chiefest in the universe.
So, from a self-contempt, grows impious pride,
Which swells your first-thought pigmy to a giant,
And gives the puffed up atom fancied sway.

God is! Philosophy here ends her flight;
This is the height and term of human reason:
A fact that, like the whirling Norway pool,
Draws to its centre all things, swallows all.
How can you know God's nature to Himself?
How learn His purpose in creating man?
What's ultimate to man, remains concealed.—
Enough for you, to know that here you are—
A thought of God, made manifest on earth.
Ah, yet His voice is heard within the heart;
Faint, but oracular, it whispers there:
Follow that voice, love all, and trust to Him.
O, learn, dear Oliver, to pity one,
Who wanders in this world without a faith
In something greater than his feeble self!

OLIVER.

I'll shun this ground. I saw not that I stood
O'er an abyss, like a weak, erring child,
And prattled wildly on destruction's brink.—
Yet thoughts, like these, will rise in spite of me.

CALAYNOS.

I know it; 'tis the taint of primal sin,
That mingles with each thought, mars every act,
That stains our very good with something ill;
And, like the poison which abounds in plants,
Mingles its portion with our healthiest food.

OLIVER.

Does not this knowledge of man's sinfulness
Awake a doubt of individuals,
And make you cautious, when you deal with men?

CALAYNOS.

No; I have pre-determined trust in man,
That never alters, till I find him false.
I am above the common herd in power;
No rogue can wrong, but in my ample purse;
Which I scarce feel, which, had he asked, I'd
given.

OLIVER.

'Tis all in vain! I cannot raise a doubt
In his ingenuous nature.—There's no hope.

I have but slender grounds to doubt Don Luis;
And my own doubts, perchance, may work me ill—
Yet will I go to death, if he's not false!
I, from Seville, will gain the facts I want;
Meantime—(*Aside.*) My lord, much of your friend
you'll see;
For you must hunt, and feast, to pass his time,
And show all courtesies that may befit.

CALAYNOS.

Nay; he's too dear a friend to make a stranger.
I will divide my castle and my wealth;
Let him use each, as suits his present mood.
We will not clash in interests: he may hunt,
I study; thus, each may enjoy his bent.
Then Doña Alda will be much with him.

OLIVER.

Hum, hum, I like not that. [*Aside.*

CALAYNOS.

She is so full of life, so fond of change;
They two can put their restless heads together,

Unhood their thoughts at every whim that flies,
And chase the quarry till they bring it down.

OLIVER.

Heaven grant, these coupled falcons prove not haggards! [*Aside.*

(CALAYNOS *reads,* OLIVER *writes. Scene closes.*)

SCENE IV.

A room in the castle. Enter MARTINA.

MARTINA.

I wonder where the strangers can have gone?
I've searched the castle o'er, to find them out;
Yet save the glimpse I caught as they came in,
Have tried, in vain, to get a peep at them.
The master has a gay and courtly air,
Which proves him of high birth, and liberal training.
The man, too, bears himself in proper trim,
And shines, although reflected is his light.
'Tis nigh as well to serve a gentleman,

As to be gentle born—to catch his ways,
Follow his manners, and imbibe his tastes;
Learn what is graceful, what to be eschewed;
Garner the grain, and fling aside the chaff:
Till, in the end, the copy may become
A finer work than the original.
I've half a mind to fall headlong in love;
Certes I will, if he show sign of fire.

(*Enter* SOTO.)

SOTO.

Good day, fair maid! We have not met before.

MARTINA.

Good day, fair sir!—the better since we meet.
I'll show him I can speak as fair as he. [*Aside.*

SOTO.

Are you a dweller 'neath this roof above,
Or but a passing angel here alit?

MARTINA.

Ay, and a treader of this floor beneath!

Throw off your lofty style.—I'm not a fool,
Nor a plain country maiden, as you think.

SOTO.

Plain you are not; that can I truly say—
I hope a maiden.

MARTINA.

As you are a knave!
What if I'm not a maid?—What if a wife?
I'm still my lady's maid, say what you will.
What if a widow? Would you like me less?

SOTO.

Shall I speak plainly?

MARTINA.

Plainly as you think.

SOTO.

Then, if a maid, I hold you 'bove all price.
If you're a wife, keep your dear husband hence;
I'd spit the villain, as I would a toad!
If you're a widow, then, I think of you
As of a nut, when all the kernel's gone—

As of a fruit, when all the juice is dried—
As of a feast, when all the meats are eat—
As fair outside, but rifled all within!
An unclaimed hawk may come to know the lure,
And we may teach the haggard as we list;
But when once broken, by an unskilled hand,
She gains such tricks as training cannot mend.

MARTINA.

Why the dog's mad in love! (*Aside.*) I am a maid.

SOTO.

Let me catch breath, and thank you for those words!
My blood runs free, that nigh became a mass,
Congealed and stagnant, by my freezing doubts!

MARTINA.

Come from your stilts—I fain would like you, sir;
But you must be familiar, not too lofty:—
You fly your words above my simple ken.
If you'll make love, why, make it like a man,
Not like a demi-god—we have enough

Of word-inflated mortals in our house.—
How do you like this place?

SOTO.

O, past all bounds—
That is for you; for one thing else I hate it.

MARTINA.

What thing is that?

SOTO.

Be secret—Oliver.

MARTINA.

You hate him? I do too, most bitterly.
The scurvy fool, who fain would be a sage!

SOTO.

The prying knave, who has discovered more
Than his dull lord, with all his learning, could!
Things are at pretty pass, when servants grow
Above their masters—saving you and me.

MARTINA.

Pray tell me all.

SOTO.

Well, let us walk apart:
Some ear, less honest, our discourse might catch.
I'll tell you all, for we both pull one way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

The park before the castle. Enter DON LUIS.

DON LUIS.

The means, the means!—My love is cold as snow;
I dare not tell her what I burst to say.
But she may change; as Hecla sends forth fire
From out the ice, which hides its burning heart.
But how? Alas, she knows not of my love;
Can take no interest in me, uninformed.
Did she but know, that might arouse her heart;
For half the love of earth from this source springs;
First woman's flattered at the heat she wakes,
Then falls in love, to rid herself of debt.
I dare not tell her; that might blast the whole,

And drive me from her presence unrepaid.
Yet she must know ; but by some other means—
Not know but doubt it. Let that thought once in,
No band of angels e'er can drive it out,
No force usurp its sway. I'm well convinced
She bears no love for her great booby lord :
If she is secret, he can ne'er suspect—
Too busy up in heaven to think of earth.
There's Oliver;—I'll give him food for doubts,
Which if he breathe, I, through the influence
Wielded by me above his heaven-rapt lord,
Will drive the beggar forth.—O, friendship dear,
Through thee I'll work, and gain my end at last.

Enter SOTO.

SOTO.

I have been looking for you far and near.
I've all the castle's secrets on my thumb.

DON LUIS.

What know you, Soto ?

SOTO.

Nay, what know I not?
I know, my lord, all that one girl could say
In scarce an hour; but what would pose ten men,
And they fast talkers, in a day to tell.

DON LUIS.

Who gossiped thus?

SOTO.

Martina.

DON LUIS.

Who is she?

SOTO.

The confidential maiden of my lady;
A girl of wit, and most complete in form,
With thoughts and aims above the place she holds.
She, too, abhors the crafty secretary;
And when I told her how I scorned the wretch,
She loosed her eager tongue, told everything
Which she had gathered since she first came here.
At last we fell in love, and there we rest.

DON LUIS.

Go on, good Soto, cram her to the brim,
Love her as you have never loved before;
Or rather make her love you, that were best.
I too have fallen in love.

SOTO.

With whom, my lord?

DON LUIS.

With Doña Alda.

SOTO.

Are you much in love?

DON LUIS.

In love to death!

SOTO.

O, that is nothing strange.
You've sickened for a score, died for a score;
Till the next passion brought you health and life.
There was Constanza, Clara, Viola,
Maria, Isabella, Phillipa—

DON LUIS.

Peace! you are crying this she merchandise
As tradesmen do their wares. I tell you, knave,
The love which now I feel, like hunger gnaws me!

SOTO.

They feed too well to give that figure force
In this fat castle. But a week ago,
When I was thin and famished in Seville,
Such words had drawn forth tears of sympathy.
But there's the husband loves you 'bove all heights.

DON LUIS.

And here am I, that hate him 'neath all depths.

SOTO.

Natural enough; you bear it in your blood.
I lately heard a ballad, ages old—
A scurvy ballad,—a foul, lying ballad—
Which told how some great ancestor of his
Drove round Granada's laughter-shaken walls,
Kinsman of yours. Not with a manly sword—
No, that were fair—with a base scourge he did it.

DON LUIS.

What mean you?

SOTO.

He's of Moorish blood.

DON LUIS.

You fool

SOTO.

Witness his Moorish name, Calaynos.

DON LUIS.

True.

Who told you this?

SOTO.

Martina told me, sir.

'Tis a mere taint he bears paternally:
Though very slight, yet, in the pious eyes
Of the hidalgos of Castilian breed,
Worse than all crimes the devil ever did.—
'Tis a grave secret, not to be divulged.

DON LUIS.

Ah, now I think, I heard it when a boy.
What of his lady—is she Moorish too?

SOTO.

No, of the purest blood.

DON LUIS.

Why, this is strange!

SOTO.

Her sire was proud, but sunk in poverty;
The lord was rich, but of the unclean blood;
And so they compromised, and struck a trade.

DON LUIS.

Then the Moor bought her?

SOTO.

So Martina says.
That's why he would not take her to Seville,
For fear she'd learn what half of Spain well knows.

DON LUIS.

You're sure she knows it not?

SOTO.

Who'd dare to tell?
He'd pitch the bold informer in the moat
To drink his health: he's more than sovereign here.

DON LUIS.

Now, lovely Alda, I have hold on thee,
Shall draw thee to me, should all else fall short. [*Aside.*
Go, Soto, tell this new-made love of yours
That I'm neck-deep in love for her fair lady.—
You need not tell her to be secret.—Go!

SOTO.

Here's mischief brewing. [*Aside.*] I obey you, sir.
[*Exit.*

DON LUIS.

Thanks, love! This news outgoes my wildest hope.
I doubt no more, the thing is certainty;
The chase is simple, and the conquest sure;—
The means, which cannot fail, are in my hands.
Sure 'tis a virtuous deed to set her right;

To show this cozening Moor in all his guilt,
In all the blackness of his foul deceit,
To her dear eyes.—Good Lord! a boy might triumph!
Wo, wo, Calaynos! this sole crime of thine
Shall draw upon thy head a double grief! [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

A room in the castle. Enter MARTINA *and* SOTO.

SOTO.

There bloom twin rose-buds 'tween your nose and chin,
That I'd fain taste.

MARTINA.

Kind sir, beware the thorns!
[*Showing her nails.*

SOTO.

I've felt the thorns, they rankle in my heart;
Nought but thy lips can draw their venom out.
[*Kisses her.*

MARTINA.

Your act has bruised the heel of your desire,
So close it treads behind.—Dost love me, sir?

SOTO.

Love thee! I love thee past the flight of thought.
Words cannot tell thee—nay, I cannot think,
I cannot truly to myself conceive—
Cannot set bounds to, cannot understand
The one idea which o'er me reigns supreme,
And bows me at thy feet—(*Kneels.*) I can but feel
The might of that strong spirit.—Useless words!
[*Rises.*
I see thou hat'st me, see thou think'st me fool—
Know thou wilt scorn me—send me from thee far,
To spend my days in mortified despair.
O, what a dolt was I, to tell thee this!
But my full heart drove on my silly tongue.
Farewell, for ever!

MARTINA.

Stay; I hate thee not.

SOTO.

But dost thou love me? Say that word, or I—

MARTINA.

I love thee.

SOTO.

Wilt thou ever love me thus?

MARTINA.

Till soul and body fall apart, I will.

SOTO.

O joy, O love! Success beyond my hopes!
I, like a reckless gamester, staked my all
On this last throw, and see, the game is won!

MARTINA.

Play not again; or you may lose your winnings.

SOTO.

Fear not, dear maid, I'm rich in what I've won.
But dost thou know, Martina, that we two
Are not the only lovers here?

MARTINA.

How so?

SOTO.

My lord thy lady loves, as I love thee,
And she must love my master, as thou lov'st;
Or we this dismal house can never fly;
Here he'll abide till doomsday.—Dost thou see?
We must contrive to win her to his love;
For if she flies, then fly we in her train.

MARTINA.

She loves him not; yet may be made to love.—
I'll do my utmost; for thy sake, not his.

SOTO.

Where dost thou lodge?

MARTINA.

Just next my lady's room,
And Hymen keeps the key.—Fair sir, good night!
[*Exit.*

SOTO.

She's a brave wench; but somewhat over prudent.—
Well, if I wed her, I'll not mate a fool.
Now to Don Luis; let him watch his game,
If he will play at hazard with the Moor—
There'll be swords drawn before this cast is o'er.
[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The great hall in the castle. Enter* DON LUIS *and* SOTO.

DON LUIS.

Yet I much doubt the power Martina holds.
In small affairs her influence may be great;
But in a matter like the one now toward,
I fear she must come off with sorry grace.
I value virtue, though I have it not,
And know its power to set all wiles at nought:
Heart-rooted good may pass through fire unscathed,
And chastity can keep a fiend at bay,
With its pure sinless front.

SOTO.

Bravo, my lord!
Here's a fine speech, to come from one like you!

DON LUIS.

Soto, I've trod all paths of sin and guilt,

And know the wickedness and crimes of men;
Yet would a fool have been, had I not seen
That virtue may exist, though rare indeed.
I tell you, I have met it everywhere,
In halls and hovels; and have oft retired,
Abashed and conquered, from its injured look.

SOTO.

My lord, if thus you reason 'gainst yourself,
As if persuading from your first design,
Give up the chase—I'll never counsel guilt.

DON LUIS.

No, by the gods! you misconceive my aim.
Fools come to nought, who follow cheating hope;
I ever look at the dark side of things,
And weigh the chances 'gainst my own success:
So bring to enterprise a wary eye,
Prepared for every stop that balks my way.
Nought but long-suffering good, that triumphs most
When most oppressed by adverse circumstance,
Can 'scape the snares that threat fair Alda's feet.

SOTO.

Martina calls her weak, of fickle mind,
Curious for change, and discontented here;
Unstable in design, thence, easily led.

DON LUIS.

She may be thus, and yet be pure as heaven.

SOTO.

Monstrous, my lord! Do you not blush with shame,
To look on virtue, and dissect it thus?
If I e'er thought of good I'd turn a monk.

DON LUIS.

You say Martina knows no ill of her,
No sin, the slightest—not a hook or loop,
Whereby to lead her on? Mayhap, her lord
Has told his Moorish birth, in some soft mood—
Has reconciled the stain, and won regard.
If he has not, love shall succeed through guilt.

SOTO.

Martina gives but one reply to that;

She says her lady never had a hint
Of how Calaynos wronged her;—rest on this.

DON LUIS.

'Tis well, 'tis well; the sharper then the stroke,
The keener then the pang, the more she loves.—
Nay, nay, she loves him not—to that I'll swear;
But this will tear respect and awe away.
Martina must contrive we meet to-night;
And you stand ready at the horses' heads.
If you would take your baggage, have her prompt,
And pack her safe upon another horse;
While you ride guard, to hinder all pursuit—
My steed bears double.—See, the lady comes.

(*Enter* DOÑA ALDA *and* MARTINA. SOTO *and* MARTINA *talk apart.*)

Lady, I waited to address you here.
I on the morrow for Seville depart.

DOÑA ALDA.

So soon! Calaynos knows not your intent?

DON LUIS.

Not yet. An urgent matter calls me off.
But ere I go—if, lady, you'll permit—
Some words, deep freighted with your happiness,
Must claim a notice.

DOÑA ALDA.

Speak, sir—I attend.

DON LUIS.

Not now; to-night, if you will meet me here.

DOÑA ALDA.

Speak now: why wait till night?

DON LUIS.

Nay, bring your maid;
Let her remain in ear-shot, should you call:
I mean no wrong—I fain would do you right.

DOÑA ALDA.

Sir, on such terms, I grant what you request.

DON LUIS.

Adieu, till then—poor lady!

[*Exeunt* DON LUIS *and* SOTO.

DOÑA ALDA.

What means he?
"Poor lady!"—This is strange beyond a dream.
Why does he pity me?—why look so sad,
With so much pain and trouble on his brow;
As if he bore a load of secret wo,
That must have birth with many a fearful pang?
I'll seek Calaynos, and entreat advice—
No, no, 't will vex him. Sure he means no wrong;
For full-eyed pity never troops with guilt.
Martina, did you mark Don Luis' plight?—
How quick he left, as if to save me pain?

MARTINA.

He seemed dejected, and o'ercome with grief.

DOÑA ALDA.

Can you conjecture aught?

MARTINA.

Not much, nor clearly.

DOÑA ALDA.

What do you think?

MARTINA.

I think he is in love.

DOÑA ALDA.

Pshaw! that's the offspring of two silly heads—
Soto and you are rid to death with fancies—
He is too wise to love without a hope.
Men who have known the world as long as he,
But fall in love with great estates or gold—
Taking the encumbrant maiden as an ill;
And not with peril, such as he must brook,
Who dares to love the wife of great Calaynos.

MARTINA.

Yet such things have been.

DOÑA ALDA.

O yes; sung in ballads.

MARTINA.

Ay, and in real life, lady: Queens of Spain
Have had their paramours.

DOÑA ALDA.

So might it be,
Yet never hap to bride of a Calaynos.
No, no; some solemn mystery bore him down,
Which he must tell, though fain he'd 'scape the act.

MARTINA.

What mystery deeper than an untold love?—
What keener pang than telling in despair?
Find me a grief, to rend a loving heart,
More cruel than separation without hope!
Believe me, lady, this is root of all.

DOÑA ALDA.

Ha! think you so?—Why then, I meet him not.
I'll not put torture to his tongueless love;
I will not tempt him certain death to dare
For the poor consolation words afford.

MARTINA.

I may be wrong—perchance I may be wrong—
Nay, now I think, I cannot but be wrong.

He would conceal his love from outward show
Till the last moment—I am sure I'm wrong:
Yet am I sure he loves you, though he goes
Without a sign to show the love he feels.

DOÑA ALDA.

I will not hate him for the love he bears,
Though he is loving 'gainst the teeth of reason:
No man can say whom he will love, whom hate—
The act o'erleaps his will; and a pure heart
That burns to ashes, yet conceals its pain,
For fear it mar its hopeless source of love,
Is not to be despised, or lightly held.

MARTINA.

You are too cruel, to gain and not return.

DOÑA ALDA.

I am too just to soil Calaynos' honour.

MARTINA.

I never thought of him.

DOÑA ALDA.

Ne'er thought of him!
My chiefest spring and stimulant of good,
Before whose face crime takes an humble guise,
And blushes at its meanness—never thought!

MARTINA.

I think so much of you, and of your interest,
As to forget all that to you is foreign.

DOÑA ALDA.

And can you separate my lord from me?—
What bears on him, has double weight for me.
Did I not think this midnight interview,
Through me, held things of moment to my lord,
I ne'er had granted it; for he shall hear,
Ere I have time for thought, the substance of it.

MARTINA.

'Tis but time lost:—I will not urge her more,
Lest I disgust her with my Soto's lord.
She ever flies from Luis to Calaynos;

And when I name the Don, she bends her thoughts
Full on her lord, and speaks of him alone.
Her admiration has nigh grown to love.
Luis must plead to-night—pray Heaven he win!
[*Aside.*

DOÑA ALDA.

What are you muttering, girl?

MARTINA.

I hummed a tune,
Of a poor squire who loved a noble lady.

DOÑA ALDA.

Heaven grant the lady was a maid, not wife!

MARTINA.

I cannot tell.—When comes this interview?

DOÑA ALDA.

What hour?—O, I forgot.—He named no hour.

MARTINA.

Well, say at two.

DOÑA ALDA.

Why, that is very late.

MARTINA.

The better; for no listeners will be near.
That base-born cur, that prying Oliver,
Roams o'er the house, like a flushed hound on scent.—
I wonder what the villain would nose out?
He counts us all, but his dear lord, as game.
I vow, I have no peace: at every door,
Through every glass, I see his ugly face.

DOÑA ALDA.

He is, you know, Calaynos' Mercury;
Who, through him, watches that his guest is served

MARTINA.

Well then, I'll say at two. [*Exit hastily.*

DOÑA ALDA.

Stay, stay, Martina!—
She hears me not. One hour is like another;
'Twill be no darker when two strikes than nine.
I would not trust this man at such a time,
Having suspicion that he bears me love,

Did I not hear his virtues told to me,
From morn till eve, by my most thoughtful lord.
If I should ask Calaynos, he'd say—go;
There is no fear where good Don Luis comes—
Trust him, my child; for he is honour's soul!
Well, well, I'll go—I marvel what it bodes? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The study of CALAYNOS. CALAYNOS *and* OLIVER.

OLIVER.

When does Don Luis leave?

CALAYNOS.

Not soon, I hope.
His visit here has brought the colour back
To his wan cheek, and lent a healthy cast
To thoughts that sickened o'er his former woes.
And now, he looks like one buoyed up with hope;
Who'll bravely swim above dull lethargy.—

We surely may predict much good of him,
When he returns to mingle with mankind:
He will not rust in ease; he'll speak and act,
And do the utmost God has given him power.
Ah, he who rests in sloth, bears half the guilt
Of him who goes about to compass ill;
For heaven has lent him strength to conquer sin,
Which, through disuse, lets evil run unchecked.
He who has power to plant one seed of truth,
And does it not, is nigh as bad as he
Who, with broad hand, sows falsehood through the land.

OLIVER.

I hope with you; and yet I fear, my lord.

CALAYNOS.

Fear what? Speak out.—Again at your suspicions!

OLIVER.

I late received some letters from Seville,
Which place your guest in no too virtuous light.
They say—

CALAYNOS.

Before you speak, pray answer me.—
From whom this news, and how was it obtained?
I said you'd surfeit doubt, if food you sought;
And here is proof.—Go on; whence came this news?

OLIVER.

From a fast friend, who loves you as my master:
A man whom anxious guilt would ne'er suspect
Of saying aught beyond the pale of truth.
He gained intelligence from public rumour—
Why, it is broad and common as the sun;
But, chiefly, from those very creditors,
Who got your gold, and then enjoyed the trick.

CALAYNOS.

And shall I doubt my friend for knaves so base,
Who thus avow they practised villany?—
Did he not tell me of the cunning traps
In which they snared him, in which now you fall!
If they're so lost to shame, as to confess

That through a trick they wronged my confidence,
How shall I now believe, though seeming true,
The tangled tale they blush not to unfold?

OLIVER.

Nay, sir, if you fling logic in my teeth,
And reason facts to falsehoods, I have done.

CALAYNOS.

Can you not mask your thoughts, if they offend?

OLIVER.

Next God comes truth, and in that rank I love it!

CALAYNOS.

Sir, I have borne unmurmuring, day by day,
Your wily hints, though wounded to the quick—
I have been vexed by your sly, boyish tricks,
That sought to lead a man of twice your years;
I told you once before, I tell you now,
That guilty cunning which preys on itself,
Content with proof would make a sophist stare,

You have mista'en for wisdom.—Leave me, sir—
To-morrow I shall want a secretary.

OLIVER.

Good heaven! my lord, you would not cast me off?
You would not thrust me on this evil world?—

CALAYNOS.

You will see all the traps, shun all the snares,
And prosper bravely, as the wily do.—
Nay, now I think, I have another house
Beyond the mountains, out of sight and hearing;
Go there and dwell—the pension is the same.

OLIVER.

Spare me, my lord! Be just if you are cruel;
Nor taunt me with the pay I never sought.
Have I loved gold, or have I hoarded it?—
Where is the wealth you gave in my command?
If I must go, I go without a coin,
Whose yellow look might curse me with its shame!

CALAYNOS.

I never knew in you a sordid wish.

OLIVER.

O no, O no, you knew me from a child:
I sat upon your knee, and called you father;
Played with your tasseled sword—ah, then you smiled,
And kissed my forehead, for that tender name.—
Our cheeks were touching, when you taught me letters;
O, you were patient then, nor roughly chid
Your stammering scholar if he spelled awry.
You did not taunt me with a love of gold—
You did not stand upon your awful power,
And tell your nursling to go forth and die!
Ah no; you told me e'er to love you thus;
And for that lesson I am wrecked at last!

CALAYNOS.

Poor boy! poor boy! Nay, then remain—

OLIVER.

Not I!
I'd rather starve than eat unwelcome bread.—

That too you taught me, and I thank you, sir.
I value freedom o'er all else besides;
Nor would I be dependent for a throne.
To-morrow you'll be happy—I'll be free.

CALAYNOS.

No, no; it shall not be. Come here, my son—
Come close to me—I am again your father;
Nor shall e'en friendship sunder time-knit love.

OLIVER.

Your blessing, sir:—'twill lighten many a toil.

CALAYNOS.

Are you resolved?

OLIVER.

Ay, though my heart-strings snap!

CALAYNOS.

God bless you, son!

OLIVER.

God keep you from the snares!

CALAYNOS.

Away, away! lest you revoke my blessing.

[*Exit* OLIVER.

He does as I had done. O, stiff-necked pride!
That chokes each avenue to humble love—
That walls the glowing heart with stubborn ice,
And leaves the beds of feeling cold and dry.
Farewell! The first bright link is torn away;
Thus time will rend the reliques one by one. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The great hall in the castle. Enter DOÑA ALDA *and* MARTINA.

DOÑA ALDA.

Has it struck two?

MARTINA.

'Tis near that hour, my lady.

DOÑA ALDA.

Before or after?

MARTINA.

Just before, my lady.

DOÑA ALDA.

We are too soon.—The clock is surely wrong.

MARTINA.

'Tis natural haste. He knows a woman well.

DOÑA ALDA.

Yes, yes; a woman never waits for ill;
We always meet it.—Did you hear a step?

MARTINA.

Not I.—Did you?

DOÑA ALDA.

Perhaps it was my heart,
That beats so painfully against my side.
Would it were over! (*Clock strikes.*) Hark! there strikes the clock;
It sounds as if 'twould wake the castle up.—
Did you e'er note before how loud it strikes?

This is not right—I feel it is not right.
I'll leave the hall.—See, how those portraits frown!
As if I'd done some crime, or was about it.

MARTINA.

You are too late—look, where Don Luis comes!
He means no wrong.—Nay, lady, I'll be near.

DOÑA ALDA.

Sure never evil wore so smooth a face.

(*Enter* DON LUIS. MARTINA *retires within.*)

DON LUIS.

Your prompt attention chides my lingering steps.

DOÑA ALDA.

Speak quickly, sir: I have short time to hear.

DON LUIS.

What, without more delay?

DOÑA ALDA.

Right to the purpose.

DON LUIS.

O, then prepare your ears to hear a tale

Shall shake your soul, and task your tottering mind
To bear its feeble body firmly up.

DOÑA ALDA.

With such dread prelude, what must I expect?

DON LUIS.

First, lest it seem 'gainst nature, or to prove
That I am quite devoid of gratitude
Towards him whose kindness I have felt, and feel,
Know the full cause which prompts me to the deed.
Know 'tis to see you righted, who are wronged—
Wronged in a way that most concerns your honour—
Wronged by a wretch in whom you have most trust;
But to be righted by a man who loves.
Yes, yes, I love you—love you with a heart
That ne'er before knew love for womankind.
But yet I love you purely as a saint:
I dare but worship, hope not to approach;
I have not thought to win a smile or sign:

I bow in homage; sacrifice a heart,
Though torn and bleeding, spotless as the lamb.
Nay, more, I pray to have my love forgiven,
Whose adoration may offend your eyes;
For oft devout and reverend worship seems,
In others sight, no purer than foul sin.
Yet must I tell my love; my dammed up heart
At length has swept each choking fear away,
And caused a flood in which, perchance, I'll drown.
O, spare me, lady;—say you can forgive!

DOÑA ALDA.

Audacious man, dare you o'erleap the brink,
Nor know the fearful depth that yawns below?
Have you e'er looked, from yonder window's edge,
Down on the grisly rocks that jut beneath,
Ragged and cruel as the chafed boar's fell tusks?
Have you e'er turned your dizzy eyes aloft,
To view the tower which hangs above those crags?
On that same tower, years gone, a malpert page
Sighed forth his love to our great-grandsire's daughter;

Next day they found him on the rocks below,
Mangled and dead.—Some said he slipped and fell;
But none knew how, or why.—Beware, fair sir,
If not sure footed, how you walk that tower!

DON LUIS.

Alas, alas! this is a woful tale,
That one should fall for love!—You pity him?

DOÑA ALDA.

Not for his love he fell, but telling it:
There was the crime that caused his grievous slip.
Better his fire of love had burned to dust,
Than roused up sleeping justice with its blaze.

DON LUIS.

Have you no feeling for a burning heart,
That cannot quench its fire, except in death?

DOÑA ALDA.

"Suffer in silence," is the legend graven
Beneath the shield that crowns our castle gate:
When here you came, you passed beneath that shield,
Yet have not read the wisdom it contains.

DON LUIS.

Sweet lady, hear me.

DOÑA ALDA.

Nay, no more of love.
Another word, I'll call Calaynos forth.—
Martina, are you there?

MARTINA. (*Re-entering.*)

I am, my lady.

DON LUIS.

Fool! get you gone. [*Exit* MARTINA.

DOÑA ALDA.

Ha! dare you go?—Come back!
Good night, good night; I have o'erstaid my time.—
Sir, thank your gentle bearing for your safety.
[*Going.*

DON LUIS.

Lady, return; you have not heard me out:
This is but prologue to the tragedy;
Now comes the guilty tale of which I spoke.

DOÑA ALDA.

Nay, there was guilt enough in what you said:
Tax not my ears to bear a weightier load.—
Farewell. (*Going.*)

DON LUIS.

And you are lost—for ever lost!
O, I beseech you listen, on your life!

DOÑA ALDA.

Proceed—I'll hear; but not a word of love.

DON LUIS.

No, 'tis of hate, of most malicious hate—
Hate self-engendered, without cause or motive—
Against you borne by one you dearly trust;
Shown in the heavy wrong 'neath which you live,
Though all unweeting that such crime exists.

DOÑA ALDA.

Who does me wrong?—One whom I love and trust?
Martina?

DON LUIS.

No; strike nearer to yourself.

DOÑA ALDA.

Then Oliver; for he is next my lord.

DON LUIS.

Your lord himself.

DOÑA ALDA.

'Tis false! 'tis false as sin!
I will not waste a moment on a lie.—
Get hence, you scurvy thing, base hypocrite,
That thus would stab your benefactor's back!—
You dare not face him, coward, and say this,
Lest he should whip you with his undrawn sword!
Get hence! 'twas fit you should crawl forth at night,
If you must spit your pent up venom forth;
But keep your slimy poison from my ear,
Or I may crush you, toad!

DON LUIS.

Be calm, and hear.

DOÑA ALDA.

Be mad, and rave! I might forgive you then.—
Yes, you are mad; but you shall have a cage!

DON LUIS.

I tell you, mortal ne'er such wrong endured—

DOÑA ALDA.

As you dare fling upon me.

DON LUIS.

Hear me out.—
Who do you think your lord, Calaynos, is?

DOÑA ALDA.

The noblest, greatest, wisest man in Spain!

DON LUIS.

I tell you, lady, he is one half Moor;
His other half holds every baseness in it,
That spots the nature of the lowest white.

DOÑA ALDA.

A Moor, a Moor—a lie!

DON LUIS.

His name, his name!
Is it not Moorish, from the first to last?—
'Tis sung of in our ballads.

DOÑA ALDA.

Gracious heaven!
I never thought of that—I never thought—

DON LUIS.

Look at these portraits, dark by blood, not age,
Clad in the Moorish steel from crest to heel.—
Thus scowled they on the ranks of Ferdinand,
When they mowed down the brightest flowers of Spain;
Thus proudly looked they, thus they him defied,
When round these walls his leaguering armies lay;
Thus grimly smiled they, when the baffled king
Was forced to grant them lands he could not hold.
Why, are you purblind, that you see them not—
These dusky founders of his powerful house?

DOÑA ALDA.

It cannot be; my father then had known—

DON LUIS.

Yes, he was poor, and sold you like a slave—
A precious, fair-skinned slave, to sate a Moor!

You, you, the brightest jewel in all Spain,
Became a thing to fill a miser's chests:—
Why, he'd have bartered with the devil for you!
Would you have proof?—I'll bring a crowd of it.
This why Calaynos kept you from Seville—
This cause of the secluded life you lead;
Forbid to mingle in the joys of life,
To wrap his damned, black mystery closer up!

DOÑA ALDA.

O, misery, despair! Where shall I turn?

DON LUIS.

Turn to me, dearest, I will succour you.

DOÑA ALDA.

Avaunt! you child of hell, you torturer!
Foul, tempting fiend, through you I thus have fallen.—
Why came you here, to mar my paradise,
With knowledge proffered by the hand of crime?

DON LUIS.

O, then return; go to your darling's bed;

Crawl to his side, and kiss his thick-lipped mouth;
Play with his curly pate, and call him fair;
Pray heaven to bless you with a hybrid race!
O, hug him close, close as fools clasp a sin,
And dream you're happy; that were wise and kind.—
If you have woman's spirit, bear it not!

DOÑA ALDA.

O, foul—O, foul! and they to do this thing—
Father and husband!—Oh, my heart will burst!

DON LUIS.

I tell you, you were cheated by this Moor,
Lied to and cozened, made a merchandise,
Sold to the highest bidder—he bid high.
Now he might sell you to some other hand,
If he could get a profit on his ware.—
What worse than this? What worse can come than this?—
He'll pack you off to Africa some day!
Ah, you have breathed deceit, and fed on guilt;

Thought him a saint, who was at heart a fiend.
Poor child, poor child, now could I weep for you;
But anger chokes the kindlier channels up,
With thinking on this base, heart-cheating Moor,
This—

DOÑA ALDA.

Spare me!—Calaynos— [*She faints.*

DON LUIS.

But one way remains.
Now nerve me, love, to bear my precious freight.
[*He carries her off.*

(*After a pause, enter* CALAYNOS.)

CALAYNOS.

Methought I heard a voice repeat my name;
And then a hurried rush of trampling feet.
No, 'twas a fancy; all is still.—These lights—
Why burn they here, at this unwonted hour?—
Watching, like grief, the dull, cold midnight through.
This is a strange neglect, unknown before,
And dangerous. I must draw a tighter rein.
These knavish servants—Ha! I heard a noise,
[*Opens the casement.*

Like the dull sound a flying courser makes,
When urged to speed along the yielding sod.
Some of the deer have broken through the pale,
And gambol nimbly 'neath the winking stars.
Bright nightly watchers, tell your secrets now;
Unfold to me the mystery of your being;
Say why ye came, how long ye thus have kept
Your faithful vigils o'er this atom, earth.
Were you but formed for man to gaze upon,
To flatter him, and puff his spirit up;
Or in creation's scale do ye hold place
Of more import than sages ever dreamed?
Ye misty pleiads, where has gone the star
That, ages since, among ye disappeared?
How men with wild conjectures vex their minds,
To find what cause could blot that fiery orb:
Yet if a brother mortal leaves his sphere,
From this vast human firmament struck out,
They pass the lifeless clay without a thought
Of why he left, or where his elements.
Pale, dusty path, that, in the depths of space,

Hangs like a smoky track behind the wheel
Of some vast, burning orb; but, to the sage,
Resolves to starry pebbles paving heaven—
Nay, to great suns, to satellites, to systems,
In myriad numbers whirling on through space—
O, what is far beyond you? Can ye see
The limit that hems in the universe?
O, what remains hid from the prying glass,
Whose added strength looks still on other worlds?
Yet with this awful knowledge, impious man—
Ah, yes, the meanest of the clay-born herd,
Will strut and vapour, as if he alone
Filled the whole universe, and gave it laws.
Lo! meek-eyed morn, like a pale beggar, knocks
With trembling fingers 'gainst night's eastern gate.
Poor Oliver, this morn is black to thee!
I must retire. (*Knocking.*) What can that knocking
mean?—
Where are the sluggish knaves that tend the gate!
[*Bell rings.*

Ho, Oliver, come forth! (*Enter a Servant.*) Quick,
ope the gate. [*Exit Servant.*
This early summons bodes some weighty matter.

(*Enter* OLIVER.)

OLIVER.

My lord, you called?

CALAYNOS.

Nay, get to sleep again.
I know not why I called—'twas habit—go.

OLIVER.

You know full well I did not sleep last night.—
'Tis useless to attempt it.

(*Enter a Forester wounded.*)

CALAYNOS.

Who are you,
That startle morning ere the cock has crowed?
Wounded and bleeding! If I see aright,
You wear the livery of my foresters.

FORESTER.

My wound is nothing; but the way it came
May much concern your lordship, if you'll hear.

CALAYNOS.

Say on.

FORESTER.

Well, senior, as I went my rounds,
Just ere the break of day, to watch the herd,
I saw two horsemen spurring to the blood
Across the park, as if to gain the hills.
The foremost bore a lady in his arms,
Who seemed nigh dead with fear, or dead outright:
Well, this one passed ere I could cross his way.
Beside the second rode a girl I'd seen—
My lady's maid, I think her name's Martina;
But who the man was I can scarcely tell.
Well, sir, I threw my staff across his path,
And bade him stand: out came his heavy sword;
With a side blow he struck me down to earth,
And split my skull with this unmanly wound.
The coward! If I'd had a sword, my lord,
I warrant you I'd made the fellow leap.
But then you see I was unarmed, my lord,
And it was nearly dark. I stood just so,
With my staff raised—

CALAYNOS.

I thank you for your pains.
Here's gold, to heal your wound. (*Offers money.*)

FORESTER.

I'd rather not.
My wife will cure my wound; and she'll be glad
I got a wound in trying to serve you. [*Exit.*

CALAYNOS.

There goes a man, a man without a price,
Who takes no fee for virtue! Oliver.

OLIVER.

My lord.

CALAYNOS.

What think you of this fellow's tale?
Soto has done us service, were it not
That her elopement will sore vex my lady.

OLIVER.

But who the foremost horseman?—whom bore he?

CALAYNOS.

That's strange indeed. Go call Don Luis here.

[*Exit* OLIVER, *hastily.*

Here is some gossip for a week or two:
There'll be no grumblers here till this is o'er.
I too am rid of one whose wanton breath
Forced into birth my lady's discontent,
To choke her peace with its unhealthy sprouts.

(*Re-enter* OLIVER.)

OLIVER.

Don Luis, sir, ne'er saw his couch last night;
And all his lighter luggage is removed.

CALAYNOS.

Call Doña Alda.

OLIVER.

Sir, I passed her room;
The door was open, not a soul within.

CALAYNOS.

What can this mean?—Why bite your trembling lip,
And bend your eyes so sharply on my face?

OLIVER.

Ah, what sad prophets may our fears become!

CALAYNOS.

What do you mean?

OLIVER.

My lord, I dare not say.

CALAYNOS.

'Twill not offend—speak out.

OLIVER.

You promise me?

CALAYNOS.

I vow I will not say or do you ill.

OLIVER.

The foremost horseman—who was he?

CALAYNOS.

Go on.

OLIVER.

Don Luis.

CALAYNOS.

Ha! The lady whom he bore
Was—

OLIVER.

Pardon me, for she was Doña Alda.

CALAYNOS.

Monstrous! And wags the tongue that dare say this?

OLIVER.

'Tis true, my lord, or rend me limb from limb.

CALAYNOS.

Rash boy, I will be calm—calm as the storm,
Ere on your head its gloomy terrors burst!

(*Enter a* SERVANT.)

SERVANT.

My lord, some labouring men beset the gate,
Who beg to see you; for they boldly say
That, as they went to work, they saw a man,
Mounted and armed like a stout cavalier,
Flying with Lady Alda in his arms.
On foot they could not reach him—

CALAYNOS.

Out! begone! [*Exit* SERVANT.
These torturing fiends are leagued to drive me mad!

OLIVER.

My lord, my lord!

CALAYNOS.

Why stand you there, dull sloth,
And stare upon me with your vacant eyes?
Slay wench and paramour.—Mount, mount, and follow!

(OLIVER *snatches a sword from the wall.*)

Ha! the hot blood of all the Moors is up,
And must have blood to lay it.—Mount, I say!—
You'll not desert me now?

OLIVER.

Not while my soul
Clings to its wretched clay.—Shall I slay both?

CALAYNOS.

Slay both; without a thought of mercy slay!
The shallow fools have fallen in love with death.

OLIVER.

Murder will blot my soul when I return.

CALAYNOS.

The murder of two wolves that tore your lord!

OLIVER.

Mine to obey;—I question not your mandates.

CALAYNOS.

Stay, Oliver; their blood must be on me.

OLIVER.

No, no; I'd rather do it.

CALAYNOS.

O God, forgive—
Forgive my impious rage! Withhold thy frown,
Till I have sifted, to the very dust,
This hideous matter! Follow, but slay not.
Disguise your form, and seem not what you are—
The more like them who hid their acts as thieves.
Learn all you can, and then return to me:
Slow justice is more certain of its end.
If she repent, and you are moved to pity,
And dare to bring her where I catch a glimpse
Of her repentant features, by the gods

I'll pitch you from the walls!—Be still, my heart;
No man shall see the great Calaynos moved. [*Aside.*

OLIVER.

I will obey in all.

CALAYNOS.

Away, away! [*Exit* OLIVER.
Where shall I turn? O, what thing shall I do?
How have I scorned the men of ancient Rome,
Who left their fortunes to a flying bird;
But, now, I'd hang my doubts upon a die,
Or whirling coin, and follow it like fate.
O vain philosophy! is this thy aid?
When troubles darken, and the passions rage,
Must the philosopher become a man—
A feeble man, a very fool of impulse?
'Tis all in vain, I cannot drive my thoughts
Into their wonted channels; cannot weigh,
Nor calmly speculate upon my grief.
O Alda, Alda, thoughts of thee come back,
And drive all speculation from my brain!—

Why here am I, who thought to will to do,
Who thought I'd schooled my passion as a child,
Raving, like mad, o'er one of life's poor wrongs!
How brave, how brave in me to teach long suffering,
And, when I suffer, shrink without a tug!
O Alda, Alda, never love thee more,
Never behold thee, never call thee mine!—
I have a heart that mocks philosophy;
Burst forth, my heart—I'm but a man at last!

[*Weeps.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *The great hall in* CALAYNOS' *Castle. Enter* CALAYNOS.

CALAYNOS.

The strife is vain; I cannot think nor read;
My mind will wander, and my eyes grow dim:
She clings to me like sin! I catch myself,
Involuntary, dreaming o'er the page,
And all my dream of her. Day follows day,
Yet deeper sinks the barb. Each hour my heart,
Like a calmed vessel next a hideous rock,
Heaves near this one idea. I hear her name
Breathed by the air, in every gale that blows;
I feel her hand upon my shoulder laid,
And sigh that sense can cheat. O shame, shame, shame!
Thy slime clings round me, and doth drag me down.
O pride, O o'erblown pride, on which I swam

In life's calm seas, and gaily smiled at fate;—
Thou, in the tempest's hour, dost toss me up,
On the dread top of every howling wave,
To send me thundering in its black abyss!—
Better beneath the choking brine to sink,
And die untortured. Why did she deceive?
Why do this damning act? If thunder roars,
Men look above their heads, to find a cloud;
But I am withered by a scathing shock,
And yet the cause know not. What, Alda false?
I'll not believe it—I am not awake;
I'll wake, ere long, and find her by my side;
Or she'll return, and tell it all to me.
It is a trick to try me. She is hid,
In some odd nook, to watch her jealous lord;
Next thing she'll sally out, and mock my grief.—
She false! I'd staked my soul upon her truth.
Ah, 'tis a trick, a trick—a trick to damn!
What shall I do? Who shall direct me now?

(*Turns to the portraits.*)

I dare not question you, ye men of blood;

I know your answer—draw the sword and kill!
Fling out our banner, fire the culverins,
Call in the war-bred from their ancient hills,
And let the trembling valleys hear, aghast,
Calaynos wars with man! O, empty threat!
Blood cannot heal the scars which seam my heart.

(*Opens the casement.*)

The very sky is red, is red as—blood!
Down, tempting devil, down—I will not murder:
'Tis the last print of evening's fiery foot
That burns in yonder clouds. Ere long, the night
Shall fall as black as memory on my soul—
O heaven! without a hope to light my path,
One starry hope, to lend its guiding beam:
Stumbling, and lost in darkness, on I grope
To death—O yes, to death—to peace and rest.
What dusky clouds o'erclimb yon eastern peaks?
A storm? Come on, I like thy looks, my mate!
Shake thy red lightnings o'er this wicked world—
Strike all the guilty with thy burning hand—
Pour thy cruel hail upon their naked heads—

O'erturn their habitations, root them out—
Drive them, like sheep, before thy angry face!—
Nay, let them go: slay all the innocent—
Slay all the sufferers, all that ache 'neath wrongs;
For guilt can live in peace, and smile at them!

(*Thunder.*)

Alda, awake! the God of heaven is out,
The God of justice—no, the storm will pass;
Or if it strikes, perchance 't will kill a child.
O, what a weary life is mine—strike me,
In mercy strike!

(*Enter* OLIVER.)

Ha! thou'st returned, my son?
[*Embraces him.*

Didst thou see Doña Alda on thy way?

OLIVER.

Yes, yes, I saw too much—Alas! my lord,
What dreadful thing has brought this change about?
A month ago I left thee in thy prime,
And, now, thou'rt old and wrinkled.

CALAYNOS.

Yes, my son,
Men may be aged, yet not be much in years;
My heart is old and wrinkled as my brow.
I have not long to live; I feel it here.
Yet, ere I go, I fain would tidings gain
Of Doña Alda.—Is she happy now?

OLIVER.

An hour ago, I passed a wretched town;
But, ere I left, a squalid thing of rags
Went by me, yet begged not; though I was clad,
Painted, and bearded like a cavalier.
I gave it, all unasked, it looked so sad—
That thing was Lady Alda.

CALAYNOS.

Base-born dog!
And did you dare to give her charity?

OLIVER.

'Twas of your gold I gave.

CALAYNOS.

O, pardon me:
The devil in my blood will not be laid.
And did she take it with a courtly grace,
Learned at Seville from her bewitching Don;
Or did she clutch it like a common drab?
Say on; I'm sorrow proof.

OLIVER.

Ah, no, my lord;
She hardly felt the gold touch her thin palm;
And then she smiled, so sorrowful, so sweet,
As one unused to kindness.

CALAYNOS.

Know'st thou more?
I'd steeled my heart to hear the blackest tale,
But this doth blacken fancy.

OLIVER.

Few my words.
Of her dark story much I could not gather;
And what I gained I came at by report.

She fled with thy false friend too well thou know'st;
But why, is known to him and her alone.
From some vague hints, I think the guilt not hers;
But that Don Luis used the foulest means,
And so achieved his wish most treacherously.—
'Tis said, and I believe it.

CALAYNOS.

Bless thee, heaven!

OLIVER.

She lived with him awhile, but then she left;
This too a mystery;—though I heard his knave,
His vile familiar, Soto, said in scorn—
"She was too grand a lady for a mistress!"
Since then, she wanders on from town to town,
With death's fell signet stamped upon her brow,
Looking like grief in animated stone.

CALAYNOS.

Yet the sun shines, and yet this villain lives!
O, slow, slow justice, must I be thy tool?

(*Storm increases.*)

OLIVER.

Mercy, how't rains!

CALAYNOS.

Ay, ay, alike on all.
Dost think poor Alda feels this bitter storm,
Homeless and friendless, without cloak or food?

OLIVER.

Perchance—(*A groan.*) Didst hear?

CALAYNOS.

Methought I heard a sound,
Like the weak moan of a sick, restless child.
[*Another groan.*

OLIVER.

And there again! It comes from 'neath yon window.

CALAYNOS.

Look out and see.

OLIVER. (*Looking out.*)

I saw, by the last flash,
A huddled form that cowered against the wall.

Perchance, some helpless child has lost its way,
And cannot find the gate.

CALAYNOS.

Go bring it in:
No beast should suffer on a night like this.
[*Exit* OLIVER.

(*Goes to the casement.*)

Ay, shake your fiery tresses, dusky clouds;
I have resolved—ye cannot move my mind!
Ye'll spare me for this act—ye love a crime;
Or long ago ye'd scathed that viper's skin.—
Three days from this he dies, and by my hand.

(*Thunder.*)

Roar on, roar on! I'll plunge my arm in blood
Up to the elbow—he shall bellow too!
Poor Alda, whither roamest thou, sad wretch,
Without a home or comfort?—Spare her, heaven!
For thou canst soften tempests to a breath,
To succour the shorn lamb—O, she is shorn!

(*Re-enter* OLIVER, *with servants bearing* DOÑA ALDA *on a couch.*)

OLIVER.

She has not long to live :—I brought her here.

CALAYNOS.

Brought whom ?

OLIVER.

The lady Alda.

CALAYNOS.

Gracious heaven !
Why I am passion's plaything.—Shall I rave ?—
Shall I grow drunk on grief, and fire the house ?—
Or what most desperate and headlong act
Hast Thou reserved for me ? I'm ready—speak !
Say anything ; but let me do, not think ;
For I with thought grow mad !

OLIVER.

Look on her, sir.

CALAYNOS.

I cannot.

OLIVER.

Look ; more harmless thing ne'er lived.

Ah, she is very still, and cold, and pale ;
Scarce a pulse flutters; she is near run down;
The balance of her body hardly beats :
Another move, then follows endless rest.

CALAYNOS.

Endless ! Stand here; I'll look at her once more.

(*Approaches the couch.*)

Poor wretch, poor wretch, why grief hath rubbed thee sore !
I see its marks upon thy once smooth brow ;
And it has crept among thy tangled hair,
To nestle in its silk. Sad mark of wo,
I'll not believe thy guilt ; 'twas not thy fault ;
That villain Luis, by some hell-hatched lie,
Drove thee past reason. Thou hast a tale, shut up
Within the hollow chamber of thy breast,
To make avenging falchions bristle earth ;
Thou could'st urge stony death to mend his pace,
And strike the monster ere his day. She moves.
Go to her, Oliver ; I cannot stay.

Perchance, she'd speak, yet has short time for words.

DOÑA ALDA.

Calaynos.

OLIVER.

Hark! she calls thee, sir.

CALAYNOS.

Go, go!

OLIVER.

Lady, I'm here.

DOÑA ALDA.

Nay, nay, deceive me not.
I saw a pitying face bent over me,
And it was his. Thou'rt Oliver. O, sir,
If thou hast trace of feeling in thy nature,
Pray bring him here. I'm weak, and ill, and fallen:
He would not come for me; for he is proud,
And I have wronged him to the depths of wrong—
Not all myself; but yet he thinks 'twas I.—
Go, ere I die, in mercy go, kind sir.

CALAYNOS. (*Rushing to her.*)

Alda!

DOÑA ALDA.

Break heart! I am content to die.

CALAYNOS.

O live, O live! I will forgive thee all.—
I will heap kindness on thee, till its top
Shall knock at heaven. We will be friends, true friends;
If not my wife, thou shalt be dearer far.—
If any here shall dare to mock at thee,
I'll hang them from the walls. to scare the wind.—
I'll guard thee, like a tiger! If the world
Should choose to sneer, why love, we'll laugh at it;
Or, if thou lik'st, I'll ravage half of Spain.—
Yes, I'll do anything; but live, O live!
For I can swear thou'rt guiltless. Tell me all.

DOÑA ALDA.

O god-like man, thy speech surpasses hope;
I had not looked for this from even thee;

I only wished to crawl to thee and die:
For I have shamed thee 'fore the face of man,
I've made thy name a sneer and mockery;
And fools may spit their slander on thy fame,
To gall thy pride, and shake thy glorious mind.
O fie, O fie! that I should do this act—
This act beneath pollution! Why not curse?—
Why not call vengeance on my head, like rain?—
Why dost not spurn me? Why not cast me forth,
To rot with kindred filth, in some foul place,
Where my rank guilt will not offend thy sense?

CALAYNOS.

Alda!

DOÑA ALDA.

It would be just: and I supposed,
When I set forth to view thy face once more,
That grooms would drive me from thy gates with whips;
For well I knew my guilt deserved no less:—
I sat in judgment on it, all alone,
And that the fiat which my conscience gave.

CALAYNOS.

Speak not of this; thou dost o'erstrain thy guilt;
Let me not doubt thee, in this solemn hour.
Tell me thy story; for I think thee wronged.

DOÑA ALDA.

Yes, foully wronged; but half the fault my own.—
There is a packet, hidden in my breast,
Which holds the truthful story of my crime;
For thee 'twas writ, ere I resolved to come.
Thou'lt spare the shame of telling thee this thing;
'Twould bring a flush upon the face of death,
And drive thee from thy firmness. When I'm dead,
Tear forth the dreadful secret.—O, my lord!—

CALAYNOS.

What would'st thou, Alda?—Cheer thee, love, bear up!

DOÑA ALDA.

Thy face is dim, I cannot see thine eyes:
Nay, hide them not; they are my guiding stars—
Have sorrow's drops thus blotted out their light?

Thou dost forgive me, love—thou'lt think of me?
Thou'lt not speak harshly, when I'm 'neath the earth?—
Thou'lt love my memory, for what once I was?

CALAYNOS.

Yes, though I live till doom.

DOÑA ALDA.

O, happiness!
Come closer—this thy hand? Have mercy, heaven!
Yes, press me closer—close—I do not feel.—

CALAYNOS.

O, God of mercy, spare!

DOÑA ALDA.

A sunny day—
Oh!—(*She faints.*)

CALAYNOS.

Bear her in—I am as calm as ice.
Come when she wakes—I cannot see her thus.

(*Exeunt* OLIVER *and servants, bearing* DOÑA ALDA.)

'Tis better so;—but then the thoughts come back

Of the young bride I welcomed at the gate.—
I kissed her, yes, I kissed her—was it there?
Yes, yes, I kissed her there, and in the chapel—
The dimly lighted chapel.—I see it all!
Here was old Hubert, there stood Oliver—
The priest, the bridesmaids, groomsmen—every face;
All the retainers that around us thronged,
Smiling for joy, with ribands in their caps.—
And shall they all, all follow her black pall,
With weeping eyes and doleful, sullen weeds?
For they all love her:—O, she was so kind,
So kind and gentle, when they stood in need;
And never checked them, if they murmured at her,
But found excuses for their discontent.—
They'll miss her: for her path was like an angel's,
And every place seemed holier where she came.
Ah me, ah me! I would this life were past!
Stay, love, watch o'er me; I will join thee soon.

(*A cry within.*)

So quickly gone! And ere I said farewell!

(*Rushes to the door.*)

(*Re-enter* OLIVER.)

OLIVER.

My lord—

CALAYNOS.

Yes, yes, she's dead—I will go in. [*Exit.*

OLIVER.

O, dreadful ending to a fearful night!
This shock has shattered to the very root
The strength of his great spirit. Mournful night!
And what will day bring forth?—but wo on wo.
Ah, death may rest awhile, and hold his hand,
Having destroyed this wondrous paragon,
And sapped a mind, whose lightest thought was worth
The concentrated being of a herd.
Yet shall the villain live who wrought this wo?—
By heaven I swear, if my lord kill him not,
I, though a scholar and unused to arms,
Will hunt him down—ay, should he course the earth,
And slay him like a felon!

If this is sin, let fiends snap at my soul,
But I will do it! Lo, where comes my lord,
Bent down and withered, like a broken tree,
Prostrate with too much bearing.

(*Re-enter* CALAYNOS.)

CALAYNOS.

Oliver,
I stole to see her; not a soul was there,
Save an old crone that hummed a doleful tune,
And winked her purblind eyes, o'errun with tears.
O, boy, I never knew I loved her so!
I held my breath, and gazed into her face—
Ah, she was wondrous fair. She seemed to me,
Just as I've often seen her, fast asleep,
When from my studies cautiously I've stole,
And bent above her, and drank up her breath,
Sweet as a sleeping infant's.—Then perchance,
Yet in her sleep, her starry eyes would ope,
To close again behind their fringy clouds,
Ere I caught half their glory. There's no breath,

There's not a perfume on her withered lips,
Her eyes ope not, nor ever will again.—
But tell me how she died.—She suffered not?

OLIVER.

She scarcely woke from her first fainting here;
Or if she did, she gave no sign nor word.
Awhile she muttered, as if lost in prayer;
Some who stood close thought once they caught thy name;
But grief had dulled my sense, I could not hear.
Then she slid gently to a lethargy;
And so she died—we knew not when she went.

CALAYNOS.

Here is the paper which contains her story:
I fain would clear her name, fain think her wronged.

(*Reads.*)

O, double dealing villain!—Moor—bought her!
Impious monster—false beyond belief!
But she is guiltless—hear'st thou, Oliver?
Nay, read; I cannot move thee as she can.

[OLIVER *reads.*

He called me Moor.—True, true, I did her wrong:
The sin is mine; I should have told her that.
I only kept it back to save her pain;
I feared to lose respect by telling her.
I see how he could heighten that grave wrong,
And spur her nigh to madness with his taunts.
She fell, was senseless, without life or reason—
Why tigers spare inanimated forms—
So bore her off. Then lie on lie—O base!
The guilt all mine. Why did I hide my birth?
Ah, who can tell how soon one seed of sin,
Which we short-sighted mortals think destroyed,
May sprout and bear, and shake its noxious fruit
Upon our heads, when we ne'er dream of ill;
For nought that is can ever pass away!

OLIVER.

And shall this villain live?

CALAYNOS.

No, no, by heaven!
Those fellows on the wall would haunt me then.—

I hear your voices, men of crime and blood,
Ring in mine ears, and I obey the call.
(*Snatches a sword from the wall.*)
How precious is the blade which justice wields,
To chasten wrong, or set a wrong to right!
(*Draws.*)
Come forth, thou minister of bloody deeds,
That blazed a comet in the van of war,
Presaging death to man, and tears to earth.—
Pale, gleaming tempter, when I clutch thee thus,
Thou, of thyself, dost plead that murder's right,
And mak'st me half believe it luxury.
Thy horrid edge is thirsting for man's gore,
And thou shalt drink it from the point to hilt.—
To horse, to horse! the warrior blood is up;
The tiger spirit of my warlike race
Burns in my heart, and floods my kindling veins.—
Mount, Oliver, ere pity's hand can hide
The bloody mist that floats before mine eyes—
To horse, to horse! the Moor rides forth to slay!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A street in Seville. Enter DON MIGUEL *and* DON LOPEZ, *meeting.*

DON LOPEZ.

Whither so fast, Don Miguel?

DON MIGUEL.

To Don Luis.

He gives a feast on this his natal day—
Are you not going? For a modern feast,
The thing will be as well as they know how.
Would the old times might come to us again!
When men drank sherry from a two-quart cup.
Pshaw! if I had my way, I'd turn time back:
Why things grow worse for every day we live.
Now if I drank at this same scurvy feast,
As we of old could drink without a thought,
The weak-brained boys would point their silly thumbs,
And ask their host, if there the devil dined?

Plague on these times! Give me the jolly days
When men held mighty flagons in one hand,
And with the other grasped their mightier swords—
None of your toasting-forks; a true Toledo,
Edged at each side, and pointed like a spear;
Why bah! these boys could scarcely lift such blades:
Those were the glorious days of wine and war!

DON LOPEZ.

May all you giants live to drink a tun;
But pardon me about the rapier, sir.

DON MIGUEL.

O yes, you'll talk of skill, and all that thing;
But 'twas more skill to 'scape a swashing blow,
Than all your thrusts, and tierces, and such trash.

DON LOPEZ.

What a cursed shame, to mince a man to death—
To chop him into slices, break his bones,
When a most gentle and well-mannered thrust
Would do as well—

DON MIGUEL.

To skewer him, like a fowl,
To puncture him, to make him die of pin stabs:
'Tis like the death that poor Duns Scotus died,
Slaughtered with pen-knives.

DON LOPEZ.

Did you hear the news?

DON MIGUEL.

Whatever's new is worse than last.—What is it?

DON LOPEZ.

The great Calaynos is again in town.
He came with such a pomp of retinue,
With such barbaric wealth, such trains of men—
All clothed like paynims of the ancient day—
That wide-mouthed burghers thought Granada's peers
Had scaled their graves, to fight for Spain once more.

DON MIGUEL.

Ay, ay, what would your modern heroes do

If this were true, and all the Moors had risen;
Headed by that Calaynos, who one day
Rode post to France, to crop the Paladins,
Just for mere love? They'd drive you in the sea—
'Sblood! but they'd make you caper!

DON LOPEZ.

This one, sir,
Is greater far than he of ballad note:
A braver man ne'er buckled on a blade;
And then so generous and polite withal.

DON MIGUEL.

You should have known his grandsire, as I did.
His was a blade would tire your hip to bear,
E'en in its baldric: and he swung it so!
Just as a child would waft about a feather.—
Here was a drinker for you.—By the gods!
A man like him can never come again;
Earth is too base for such. Ah, he was slain,
Stabbed by an upstart coward, o'er his wine.

DON LOPEZ.

Methinks his drinking came to sorry ends.

DON MIGUEL.

'Twas not his drink; 'twas a cursed rapier, sir,
Pinned him across the table.—'Sblood, my life!
A manly blade had blushed at such an act.
Adieu, sir; I must leave you.—Pshaw! what times!

[*Exit.*

DON LOPEZ.

Adieu, you drunken dotard! Who comes here?

(*Enter* CALAYNOS.)

My lord Calaynos, if I know your face?

CALAYNOS.

Don Lopez—am I right?

DON LOPEZ.

Your servant, sir.

CALAYNOS.

Are you sincere?

DON LOPEZ.

My heart cries shame on words.

CALAYNOS.

Then you can do me service 'bove all thanks.

There is a man who wronged me in Seville,
And I would kill him.—Do you understand?

DON LOPEZ.

Write out the cartel—'tis a pleasure, sir.

CALAYNOS.

That have I done long since; an hour ago
I sent it by my secretary,

DON LOPEZ.

Heavens!
My lord, that act is out of every form.
I wash my hands of this; 'tis next to murder.

CALAYNOS.

Friend, fear not that; you can escape the law.
Last night I made my will, and there I left,
To whom might be my second, gold enough
To build yon palace. 'Tis but just I shield
Him whom my deeds involve.—What say you, sir?

DON LOPEZ.

Nay, for the love I bear you, I will do it.
How ran the challenge?

CALAYNOS.

What can that import?
Defiance to the death ran through each word.

DON LOPEZ.

Such savage terms are out of date and harsh.
Now I had written a most gentle billet—
As—senior So-and-so requests the length
Of my lord So-and-so's best tempered blade;
Or any hint, polite and delicate,
Like that.—Believe me, sir, a gentleman
May show much blood in wording of a challenge.

CALAYNOS.

So I must bow my opposite to death,
Must kill by line and plummet, to 'scape blame;—
Sir, I'm above polite hypocrisy.

DON LOPEZ.

Well, as you please.—What is your rapier's length?

CALAYNOS.

Here is my sword.

(*Gives his sword.*)

DON LOPEZ.

'Tis a most worthy blade;
But near an inch too short; and next the hilt—
Just here, my lord, an eighth or so too broad,
And nigh a pound too heavy. Yet for all,
A worthy blade, though somewhat out of fashion.
A true Toledo, if I'm not mistaken?

CALAYNOS.

Not so: no man can tell its origin;
But divers quaint and wondrous legends hang
Their superstitions on this mystic steel.
Some say that 'mid the globe's eternal fires,
The labouring gnomes, with many an impious spell,
That made earth shake and stagger from her orbit,
Tempered and forged the metal of this blade.

DON LOPEZ.

A wondrous tale, more wonderful if true.

CALAYNOS.

I cannot vouch it.

DON LOPEZ.

Ah, I nigh forgot—
Whom do we fight?

CALAYNOS.

Don Luis, sir.

DON LOPEZ.

Don Death!

My lord, the man's a practised duellist;
Has killed more scores than I have met in fight.
He'll name his thrusts, before he strikes a blow,
And put them home, despite your wariest skill.
Then there's his trick, a sleight he caught in France—
Thus, thus—(*Passes*)—the shrewdest thrust beneath the guard;
'Tis fatal as the plague.

CALAYNOS.

I came not, sir,
To hold debate on blades.

DON LOPEZ.

You came, my lord,
To hold debate on death; and a good blade
Is sometimes pertinent.

CALAYNOS.

Enough of this.
We fight within an hour—you'll find me here.

DON LOPEZ.

Your servant, sir.—Adieu. [*Exit.*

CALAYNOS.

They're all the same,
These grinning courtiers, all smiles and bows,
All rules and etiquette. Such are the men
Who have our monarch's ear, and guide his councils.

(*Enter* OLIVER.)

How sad you look.—Did you not find Don Luis?

OLIVER.

Ah yes, my lord, I found him at a feast,
Drinking and roaring, 'mid the wealth you gave.
He spied me out, and in politest terms
Inquired your lordship's health. Then turned again,
And of my lady asked with blandest voice:
No feature moved when I proclaimed her dead.
With that he rose and, smiling towards his friends,
Proposed your lordship's health. 'Twas not in fear,

But at the act I shook, and my chilled blood
Crawled coldly backward on its quivering source,
To see such baseness lodged in human form.
I flung your challenge in the monster's face,
And came to seek you here.

CALAYNOS.

The mocking villain!—Well, well, let that go.
I'm near to death, or I should hate mankind.

OLIVER.

O, say not so; there may be days of peace—

CALAYNOS.

His sword will not rob life of many hours.
When I left home I felt I'd ne'er return;
All things appeared so mournful to my view.—
The old trees shook their dark green heads above,
And waved their branches, as if taking leave;
The grass was bending with the morning dew,
And dropped its woful tribute as I passed;
Ay, and the very flowers, the little flowers
Turned on me their soft eyes o'errun with tears.
When we had gained the pass between the hills,

Whose windings shut my castle from the sight,
I paused to take one last, long look at home.—
Alas, the very castle seemed to move,
And beckon sadly in the flickering air;
The old gray turrets wavered to and fro,
Nodding their hoary heads, as if in grief.
I could not choose but weep; the man broke down,
And my heart fluttered like a timid girl's.
Ah, since her death, a cloud has crossed the earth,
And everywhere I see it. But thou'lt return:
Now swear to me, if thou dost love me yet,
To do what I command.

OLIVER.

I swear, my lord.

CALAYNOS.

Thou know'st my latter days have chiefly past
In patient labours of philosophy;
And from my toil, a studious book was born,
Whose gathered wisdom was designed for man—
Swear to destroy it!

OLIVER.

Pray forgive me this;
I cannot, dare not. What, that mighty book
O'er which I've bent until the stars grew dim,
And morning caught me o'er the magic page;
Forgetful of my task, my pen all dry,
Enrapt in reading what I should have copied?
O, pardon me, my lord; 'twould be a crime
Worse than oath-breaking, worse than blasphemy!

CALAYNOS.

Didst love sweet Alda, gentle Oliver?

OLIVER.

Past love, my lord; but now I love her more.

CALAYNOS.

And would'st thou see some scribbler drag her name,
Coupled to infamy and red-cheeked shame,
Or slimed with pity of a vulgar mind,
Into the preface of a book you love?—
Would'st see her live in misery immortal;

Preserved for time to coldly comment on ?—
Would'st have her memory, which you hold so dear,
Bandied about, the scoff and jest of fools ?
No, no, before this bitter thing shall be,
Let my name perish from the thoughts of men.

OLIVER.

And would'st thou die in very name, my lord ?

CALAYNOS.

Only in name, no further can I die.

OLIVER.

We know not that.

CALAYNOS.

Know not ! then vain is knowledge.
All nature cries—Whatever is must be !
Earth's forms may change, but time can ne'er
destroy
The smallest atom in the universe ;
Much less this life of intellect, the soul,
Whose very form is changeless.—Death is not !
Serene, and calm, and indestructible,

Above the touch of chance, or sin, or time,
On these heaven-scaling attributes shall soar,
In infinite progression towards their source :—
In death is knowledge !

OLIVER.

I will do it, sir.

CALAYNOS.

Enough, I shall die happy. Get thee hence,
And have my servants near the meeting place,
To bear me from the field. But, on their lives,
Let them not interfere till all is o'er;
And should Don Luis kill me, let him pass.

OLIVER.

They may, but I will not. (*Aside.*) I'll see 'tis done.
[*Exit.*

(*Enter* DON LOPEZ.)

DON LOPEZ.

The terms are all agreed ; though, I declare,
I had some trouble with that old Don Miguel—
He is Don Luis' second. By this light !

He'd mounted you, with lances in your hands,
To run a tilt like Quixotes. Tell me, sir,
Does the first blood decide the combat o'er?

CALAYNOS.

The first death, sir, decides this combat o'er.

DON LOPEZ.

Of course, of course; but death is out of date:
'Tis not the way we fight in these fair days:
Now gentlemen may fight without a scratch.
I do assure you, sir, that in a duel
Life is as safe as if you sat in church:
You have the honour without fear of harm.—
Will not the first blood do?

CALAYNOS.

I'm of a race
Who seldom drew a sword except to kill;
They never bled, like leeches, nor will I:
Death, and not honour, is the thing I wish.—
This duel, friend, did not originate
From treading on a toe without excuse.

DON LOPEZ.

'Tis out of date; but as you please, my lord.
Have you e'er fought before?

CALAYNOS.

No, not of late:
But, in my youth, through Salamanca's school
I fought my way, and lost no credit there.

DON LOPEZ.

Ah yes; I've heard, they ever held your blade
The foremost steel in Salamanca's walls:
'Tis a good school.—But watch his French device—
The thrust beneath the guard. 'Tis nigh the time.

CALAYNOS.

Then, sir, lead on. 'Tis ne'er too soon for me.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The fields near Seville. Enter DON LUIS *and* DON MIGUEL, *meeting* CALAYNOS, DON LOPEZ *and* OLIVER.

DON LOPEZ.

Stand here, my lord.

CALAYNOS.

Let there be no delay.

DON MIGUEL (*to* DON LUIS).

Stand here, my boy.

DON LUIS (*aside*).

He's ill; I'll kill him easily.

(DON LOPEZ *and* DON MIGUEL *advance.*)

DON LOPEZ.

'Tis a fine day, and this a glorious ground.

DON MIGUEL.

Yes, for a fight with good old-fashioned blades.

DON LOPEZ.

Excuse me, sir, but we must follow custom.

DON MIGUEL.

Yes, afar off.—Here is Don Luis' skewer.

[*Gives the sword.*

DON LOPEZ (*measuring*).

'Tis full an inch too long.—I sent the measure—
There's no excuse—they cannot fight to-day.

DON MIGUEL.

What cares a man against an inch or two?
Bah! on your forms! His grandsire, in his day,
Had drawn his dagger 'gainst an ashen spear.

DON LOPEZ.

I have a name, sir, among gentlemen,
Which I'll not hazard on so grave a thing.

OLIVER (*advancing*).

Why pause you, gentlemen? My lord is ill,
And loses strength by standing such a time.

DON LOPEZ.

Don Luis' blade is full an inch too long.

OLIVER.

The murderous coward! (*Aside.*)

[*Goes to* CALAYNOS *and returns.*

Go on, gentlemen;

If 'tis a foot too long, my lord cares not.

DON MIGUEL.

Said like his grandsire:—there the old blood spoke.

DON LOPEZ.

Well, as he wills; but I again protest—

You'll bear me witness, sir, before the world?

DON MIGUEL.

Yes, yes. Stand here, my friend. [*To* DON LUIS.

DON LOPEZ.

Stand here, my lord. [*To* CALAYNOS.

Draw, sirs—advance—guard—

DON MIGUEL.

God defend the right!

DON LOPEZ.

Heavens! what queer phrases has this antique man!

[*Aside.*

(CALAYNOS *and* DON LUIS *fight.*)

My man fights well.

DON MIGUEL.

He fights too much for blood:
He'll catch a wound.

DON LOPEZ.

There's his French trick—I knew it!

(CALAYNOS *is wounded.*)

LOPEZ AND MIGUEL.

Hold, gentlemen!

CALAYNOS.

Stand back—beware Calaynos!

DON MIGUEL.

Thus spoke his grandsire when his blood was up.

DON LOPEZ.

Again!

(CALAYNOS *is wounded.*)

LOPEZ AND MIGUEL.

Hold, gentlemen—forbear, forbear!

(*They rush between.*)

DON LOPEZ.

Are you not satisfied?

DON LUIS.

I am, for one.

CALAYNOS.

I came to die, or be that villain's death.—
Stand from between us; or, by heaven's great king,
I'll make a path across your carcasses!

DON LOPEZ.

Well, well, go on—but this is bloody work!

(*They fight:* CALAYNOS *disarms* DON LUIS.)

CALAYNOS.

Turn dog, and fly!

DON LUIS.

Not while I've legs to stand.

CALAYNOS.

Down, down and beg!

DON LUIS.

No, never to a Moor!

CALAYNOS.

Ha, wretch! (*Kills* Don Luis.)

(Calaynos *staggers and falls.*)

OLIVER.

My lord, you're wounded.

CALAYNOS.

Yes, to death.

Come nearer, son—I have short time to live.—
Why dost thou weep?

OLIVER.

O, why do I not die?

CALAYNOS.

Nay, nay, dear Oliver, thou'lt think of us—
Of poor, poor Alda, and her buried lord:
Thou'lt come at sun-down o'er the dewy grass,
And kneel beside us, and thou'lt pray for her.—
Was she not wronged;—but pure, but pure as heaven?

OLIVER.

Most pure, my lord.

CALAYNOS.

O bless thee, for those words!
Come close, my son: thou wert my only friend,
And next to Alda in my heart thou stoodst.—
Wilt thou forgive me the harsh words I said,
For that false man—by Heaven's arm smote, not mine?

OLIVER.

O wo! O wo!—Nay, nay, 't was all my fault.

CALAYNOS.

Not so—come nearer. Thou wilt bury me
Next to dear Alda.—Now sweet death draws on:
I feel his icy breath upon my cheek—
The gates of knowledge lift to let me in—
Already, half the mystery of life
Rolls from my soul, like a divided veil!
The secrets of the universe unclose,
And I am filled with light!

OLIVER.

O, mighty soul!

CALAYNOS.

Stand from before me—give me air—I choke.
Next Alda—next my wife—wife—Oh! [*Dies.*

OLIVER.

The stony world may smile at broken hearts;
But there lies one cracked to the very core.

(*Enter Servants, and group round the body.*)

Tread softly—here is death!

THE END.

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